

MILITARY Miniatures

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Azimut's 85mm AA gun

Azimut's M12

DES 36R tracked carrier



★ Special Report: Chicago, The Year in Preview ★

10
No. FALL 1996

THE CHASE IS ON!

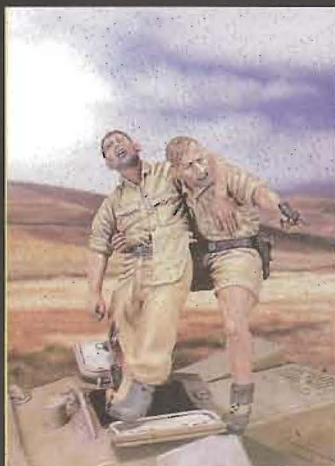


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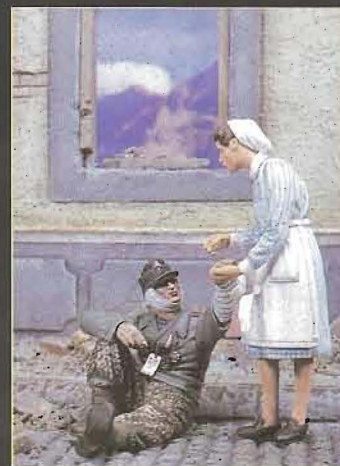
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IN REVIEW

C O N T E N T S

In Review

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4

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A peek at what's new on the figure front.

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ON THE COVER:

Masahiro Doi's Wespe takes the grade coming up and over the cover type! It's such a pretty little kit, we thought we would take a second look. Doi-san does a few simple and basic enhancements to spruce it up. Although not apparent on the cover, there's a full crew inside, including a driver. He also gives it a simple base treatment. A breakdown of the conversions and the construction photos start on page 28.

From Your Editor



Mr. Serious, meet Mr. Fun

What is a hobby anyway? If you go to the dictionary it states that it's "an activity carried on primarily for pleasure." Interesting choice of words Mr. Webster. "Primarily for pleasure." That sounds like me, and many people I know. I like it. It's fun. I consider it to be the opposite of work (that is when it wasn't work). I mean why waste time on it when it's no fun? Now that's not to say that you can't take your fun a little seriously. A lot of us out there are very committed to really immersing ourselves in this hobby. I

like this, it's good to be a little wacky about your leisure time.

And then there are "those" guys. Oh, I just know you know someone like this in your club or local shop. This isn't fun for them—it's serious, man. Real serious. Too serious, actually. These are the guys that have no qualms blurring right out that your camo job is bad, your bolts are 1/4 of a scale inch off, or my favorite: "They never did that." Don't get me wrong. Accuracy is a quest, but we all have our own interpretation of reality. *But what we do is not real.* We only represent the real thing in our own subjective little way. And that again is part of the fun.

I think that sometimes these types just get carried away. They forget that this is fun and they forget to have fun. They get so carried away with the idea of the "pure hobby" (whatever that means) that they forget that it is a hobby. They get real threatened, too. Especially by others they perceive as being a little too knowledgeable. Like they're the only ones that can crack open a book.

All this really isn't necessarily a bad thing. It is a free country after all and everyone is entitled to their opinion. The bad part about this attitude is that it's very easy to listen to and very easy to subscribe to. I've been tempted. In my (humble) opinion, what this does is simply suck the fun right out of the hobby for a lot of folks. I have seen this attitude run right through clubs and the resulting member fallout is positively shocking. I have a pet theory that there is a vast silent majority (thank you Spiro) of modelers who no longer share their hobby with others because of Mr. Serious. If you consider the overall membership of various national clubs and magazine subscription numbers, versus the total number of models sold, there is a considerable disparity. It's a theory anyway.

I have met a number of guys in my travels that build pretty mean little armor models, but simply refuse to involve themselves in club activity. Nine times out of ten this is due to Mr. Serious. You see, some guys are very serious about NOT becoming serious. Mr. Fun just wants to have a good time and that's the end of it. For him it's a very simple decision to make. If he runs into Mr. Serious too many times, he's history.

What bugs me about this is that I'd rather know Mr. Fun rather than Mr. Serious. I think Mr. Fun has a lot more to offer his fellow modelers. He's not restricting himself to certain techniques, he's probably built more models and he's learning and improving himself. He's unusually a lot more fun to talk to as well.

So here's a message for all those Mr. Serious types out there. **GET OVER YOURSELF.** This is not academia. This is not science. Those little bits of plastic and wood we win are not Nobel or Pulitzer Prizes. We're not trying to cure cancer, put a man on Mars or figure out if dinosaurs were killed by bugs or meteors. We're trying to have a good time. We're trying to enjoy ourselves, get a few moments of relaxation from our busy lives—a little time out. It's simple, really.

If you feel the same way, let the spoilers know about it. Don't be afraid to suggest lightening up a little. And don't get so immersed that you lose sight of a good time. I hope I'm wrong about the silent majority of modelers. But if I'm right, let's turn it around. Let's make a silent minority for Mr. Serious. Tell him to stay home. We're having too much fun.

Schedule, Schmedule

Here's number ten for y'all. Not too much different here from previous issues. Another feature from Japanese modeler Masahiro Doi. This time it's a very simple scene with the Tamiya Wespe. In this issue and the next we will start to diversify the type of article we place in the color section of the book. Next time it will be a straight review, but it will be a bit more elaborate.

Double Takes is back in the book. This will appear and re-appear depending on what kits are released. We also continue to refine certain layout areas such as the Mini-Men section and the Short Takes pages. We're trying a few more and larger photos in this section. Bigger is better, right?

We have taken some serious steps to improve our timeliness. Most of this year's issues have been pretty late. Many of our new procedures are working well. This issue is the fastest yet. The bad news is that the schedule is so screwed up that it probably won't be perceived as on time... Oh well. As I write this a substantial amount of number eleven is complete, too so it will follow pretty closely on the heels of this issue. Most likely you'll receive this after the first of the year, so don't be confused by the 1996 date. We do anticipate four on time issues in 1997, all aligned with the quarters of the year (knock on wood).

The good news: as we move into 1997, we are planning some pretty exciting things for MMiR, as well as a few extra surprises. 1997 will be a big expansion year, but most of it will have to remain a secret for now—I think you'll like it!

—Pat Stansell
Editor, MMiR

MiniaturesTM

IN REVIEW

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The Mail Sack

Number Nine... Number Nine...

Just wanted to send you this short letter in saying thank you for your magazine. I have always been interested in armor and finally a true modeler enthusiasts magazine has arrived. Which brings up a small but delicate item. Where is it?

Now, I know you guys are busy and this is a big undertaking but sure hate going out to the old box and not finding my MMiR. Yes, I do have the very first published copy.

Keep up the good work and see you in the Box later. Tread Heads unite!!!

—LTC Danny R. Herron

Here's the story. Number nine was mucho late. What else is new, you say? First, it was somewhat later than usual due to the large number of new products. We tend to think of it as a good thing to extend the delivery date of the mag to include these new items (but we get the idea that you don't). There was a veritable ton of stuff too. In Mini-Men we received nearly forty new products for review. Of that we included only 29 items. This is the biggest reason for the new format. We were also deluged with new items for the Short Takes section as well. All this is no excuse and our on-time record is our primary concern as we go into 1997. We hear you!

We have received a few complaints regarding finding the magazine in hobby shops before subscriptions are delivered. Here's how this works. When MMiR is published, it is simultaneously shipped to the distributors and the bulk mailing processor. In theory, it takes about two weeks for the bulk mail and the dealer issues to reach their final destinations. IN THEORY. Where this breaks down is in two areas. The first is that many of the distributors have become very efficient at keeping individual hobby shops apprised of new products. Many make contact by phone to say "hey we've got the new MMiR, how many ya want?" This wasn't always the case. In past years it usually took the hobby shop to initiate the sale (often by seeing the mag from a subscriber). As MMiR grew more popular the distributors where more anxious to make a sale.

Second problem: Bulk mail bites. We had more trouble with number nine than we ever had before. In some cases it was a full four or five weeks before issues were delivered. Again, in theory it's supposed to take no more than two weeks. We are looking in to second class bulk mail as an alternative.

Also, please, please, please make sure RZM has your current address. Bulk mail is never forwarded and we have found that a great many delivery problems can be attributed to this fact alone.

As we bring the second class option on line it should greatly improve the delivery time. We do still have a first class option. It is more dough, but you are only paying for the postage. We make no more money on a first class sub than a third class one. AND, the delivery time is sometimes as little as two days!

One more anecdote and then we'll shut up. Wacky mail fact: There's no bulk mail option for

Canada, so all issues are sent there first class. a) it's cheaper by about fourteen cents, and b) it gets there faster than U.S. first class. Frustrating? You bet (unless you live in Canada).

OK, bottom line: we're working on the problem and we want all the readers to be happy campers. Make sure your address is current. If you have a problem contact RZM Imports at 1-203-264-0775 between the hours of 10 am and 6 pm EST. Almost all of the subscribers are now within the RZM database. Very few are still listed down here, so the quickest way to inquire is to contact RZM.

That is all. Now quit reading this and go build a model!

✉

Mysteries of the Sherman Part 1

Hey MMiR and Pete Harlem. I have a question on the Sherman. Do the mounting flanges on the VVS suspensions all have external bolt heads for the attachment bolts? I noticed that they were not shown on all other peoples drawings and only apparent on certain kits.

—Geoff Hurlbut

Pete says: All the VVS bogies include the mounting flange as part of the bracket assembly. The kits put the flanges on the hull and only some include the mounting bolts. They are hard to see, but my drawings include both the flange and the mounting bolts behind the main part of each bracket. The bolts always install from the outside, not the inside. This makes them easier to remove if damaged (by a land mine for example).

The HVSS bogie has a separate flange/mount that bolts onto the hull also but it is not part of the truck assembly and does not show in my drawings. The DML HVSS has the correct mount but does not have the bolt heads, as it should.

✉

Mysteries of the Sherman Part 2

In regards to the mysterious "comb device," I have been wondering about this for a long time too. Others I correspond with also do not know for sure. Bart Vanderveen published a photo in Wheels & Tracks magazine, but there were no reactions. It is indeed strange that it appears in different shapes on different vehicles. Because it is such a common item, it has something to do with an AFV-generic part. All I can think of is that it is used as an antenna tie-down. As the opening of the teeth point downward it is not possible to hang something on it. But a rope fixed to the top of an antenna (on the back of the turret) could very well be held down with the comb device. I have seen a different version which consists of a hinged steel strip with teeth. The strip hinges through 90 degrees from perpendicular to the plane down to the surface to which it is fitted. It folds down between two lips where it can be fixed with a piece of wire. When standing up, the teeth are also pointing downward, the same way as on the fixed version. Another suggested use is that of a wire cutter, but most of the time the combs are not fitted in the right location to be of any use for that.

—Hanno Spoelstra
The Sherman Registry

Well, We think we found the answer! Or at least the most reasonable explanation for the use of this device. We agree that it does seem to work as a tie down, however it would be just as

easy to tie the darn thing down to the head light brush guard. Mr. Spoelstra makes a good point that it would not work as a wire cutter where located.

Are there any references showing this thing installed in any soft skins equipped with radios/antennas? How about the Marine Corps command Shermans used in Korea with multiple antennas, they would for sure have several of these installed.

We still think the bottle opener is a plausible idea...

✉

Foxy Lady

Bravo! Another great issue has come to the masses. However, I do believe that in the Scimitar article, what Pat meant to say was that the CVR(W) Fox is currently being phased out of service.

In 1965, the British Ministry of Defense asked for a wheeled vehicle for reconnaissance and liaison duties to replace the aging Ferret scout cars. One of the requirements was to use the same power plant and weapon as the Scorpion program. Daimler of Coventry, the company that built the Ferret, was awarded the contract in 1966 and by November of 67 had the first prototype ready. Trials started in 1968 and a total of 15 vehicles were completed by April of 69. In 1970, the CVR(W) Fox was officially accepted and production started in 72. By the time it ended in 73, 1,500 units were delivered.

The Fox is powered by a XJ Jaguar engine with a top speed of 65 mph and a power to weight ratio of 32 bhp/ton. Power steering and 4 wheel drive are standard easing the load on the driver. The weapons are the Raredon 30mm and a co-axial 7.62, both in the turret. The vehicle has a crew of three; commander, gunner, and driver. In the event that one is injured, another can take his place.

Another vehicle, the FV 222 Vixen, was also developed. It was armed with a light machine gun turret and was to be a liaison vehicle, but was canceled in 1974 due to budget cuts.

The Fox has been used as a reconnaissance vehicle by the British Army Of the Rhine (BAOR) and for security duties in Ireland. It has performed these duties well but is being phased out service due to budgetary constraints.

Another useful book on the Scorpion family is Concord's "Scorpion and the CVR Family" which can be found in any good hobby store. A harder to find reference is Arms And Armor Press' Tanks Illustrated #22 "Scorpion." Its an older book so it has photos on earlier vehicles but is a good one to have on hand. Grab it if you can find it.

I hope you found this little history helpful and remember, Tracks rule!

—Brian Mowery

Looks like we got our Vixens and our Foxes mixed up. Tally Ho!

✉

Got a problem with any of this?

Send those comments to: Mail Sack, Military Miniatures in Review, 21045 Commercial Trail, Boca Raton, Florida 33486-1006, or discuss complaints, problems, wisecracks, etc. via the Internet. Find us at the handle: MMiR35701@aol.com

Letters are sometimes edited for brevity, grammar, spelling, national security and other stuff. We're sorry that we rarely, if ever, are able to personally respond to correspondence.

The Year in Preview



Tamiya's spiffy new "Joseph Stalin Heavy tank."

It's that time of year again. Time to report on all the cool new stuff shown at the Chicago Model Hobby Show. This year's show was held simultaneously with the Tokyo Model Show, so some of the hobby's big personalities were there instead. But in spite of that there still was plenty to see. The following report is divided by manufacturer, and although some of these companies did not actually attend, their U.S. reps did fill us in on all the new junk. As always, many of the release dates are tentative. We try to be somewhat conservative on the dates, but please check with your favorite retailer before ordering. Ditto on pricing. What we list (if we do at all) is accurate at press time. All prices are U.S. retail.

Accurate Armor

AA is represented in the U.S. by Squadron Mail Order and some of the very latest was on display at their booth. We saw the beautiful little **Panzer Ia** (K-94). This is a complete kit in resin white metal and photo-etched brass. It includes a complete interior.

The following items will be available by year's end. All kits are resin/white metal/photo-etched combos

and most include markings, too.

Archer, the WWII British 17pr. SPG is item K-17. This is based on the chassis of the Valentine. Number KT-100 will be the fabulous **Scammell TRMU tractor and trailer combination**. This is the WWII British recovery vehicle. Totally cool.

Two new modern items are K-88, **Stormer Star Streak Air Defense Vehicle** and K-89, **Stormer TRV Ammo Resupply Vehicle**.

Some of the early '97 items are the long-awaited **Centurion AVRE** (K-75) and two of its specialized trailers; the **Viper Mine Clearing sled** (K-97) and the **Stores Trailer** (K-96). The AVRE may be the first of many Centurion releases from AA (and it's about time we had a decent kit of this subject).

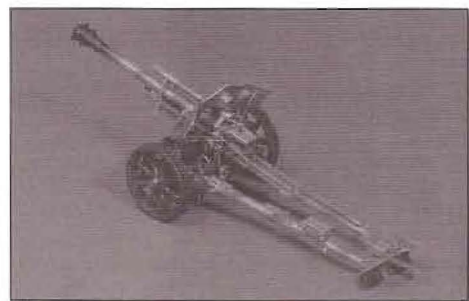
Further on down the road look for the mighty **Conqueror Mark II Heavy Tank**. This will be number K-28. Also in this same vein is the **British Tortoise** and the **U.S. T-28**. Talk about your heavy metal...

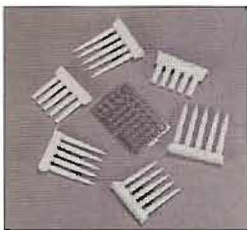
One last item now available is a second version of AA's awesome **Scammell Commander**. This is the version with the ballasted trailer and it is number K-95.

For current pricing information in your corner of the globe, contact either Squadron Signal Mail Order at 1115 Crowley Drive, Carrollton, Texas 75011 or Accurate Armour, Ltd. Units 15-16 Kingston Industrial Estate, Port Glasgow, Scotland, UK PA145.

Aires

Aires, kissing cousin to Eduard, brings us another version of the 10.5 field gun. This one's the **leFH 18/40/1943**. It differs from the earlier gun around the





wheels and the muzzle brake. This is number 3009 and like the first version it will retail for \$49.00.

Also from Aires is a lovely set of resin ammo for the Tamiya StuG III. The rounds are all

cast in resin, but the neat part about the set is that photo-etched base plates are included for all the shells and these all contain the correct stampings. It's OK, you can say it's cool.

The ammo is number 3006 and the retail is \$7.99.

The Aires line is widely available and to find a location near you contact Eduard at the address listed on page 9.

Alhambra Models

Alhambra is a Spanish company which produces a small line of plaster diorama bases and a growing line of photo-etched brass. The bases are highly unique with many different and unusual scenes depicted. The subjects are mostly of a 17th-19th century flavor, but they are sure to have many uses for 20th century scenes. They all are beautifully executed.

Their small line of etched brass sheets includes about seven sheets and among them are two different patterns of German-type plating. Great for fenders and floor plates.

We know of no U.S. Distributor for this intriguing line. Check with Red Lancers or contact them directly at Alhambra Models, Plaza Juan Zorrilla, 3, 28003 - Madrid Spain. Phone/Fax 34-1-554-49-07. They have a very well done catalog. No cost was stated for this, but be a sport and throw in some IRC's when requesting it.

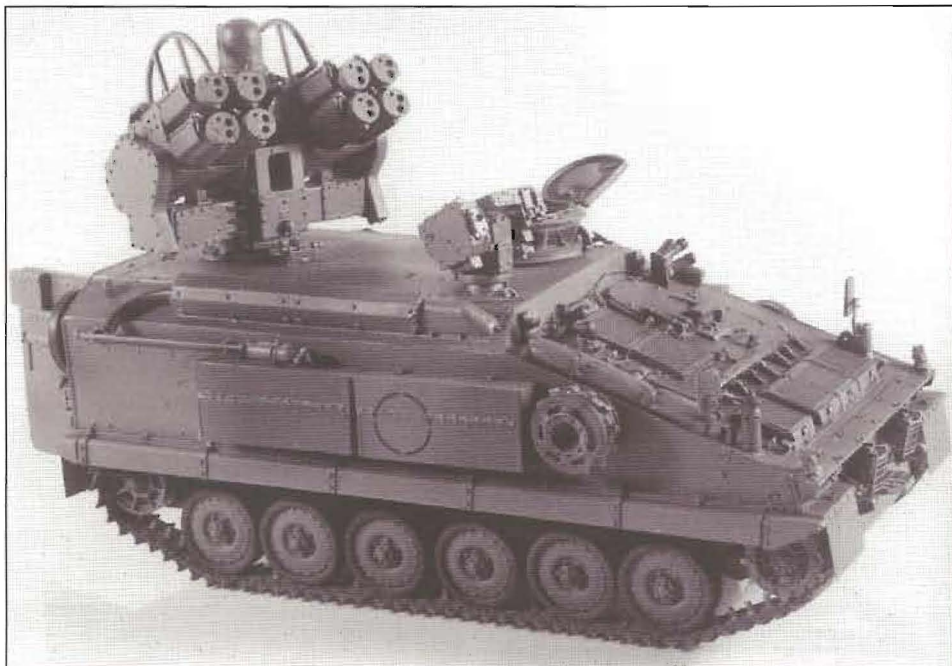
AFV Club

We still patiently await the M18 from the dudes at the Club. It remains on line for the coming year (possibly Spring) under the stock number 3515. Joining it will be the modern German Weisel. This is the little weapons platform fielded by the Bundeswehr. It's configured with a 20mm cannon in one version and with a TOW missile in another. The kit is stated to be the TOW version. It'll be interesting to see if Revell picks up the 20mm gun version for the European market (you didn't hear that from us). The Weisel/TOW will be stock number 3514. Retail on both is TBA.

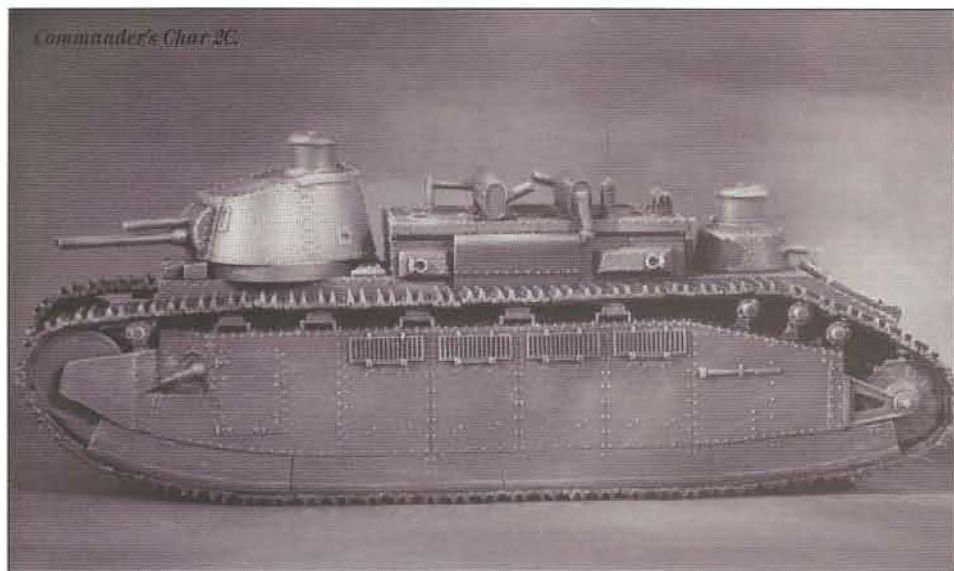


Chesapeake Model Designs

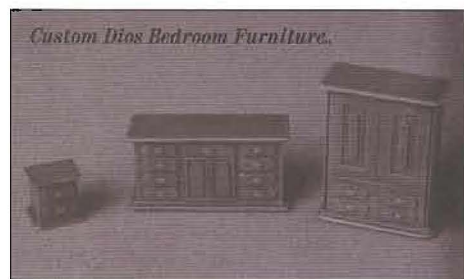
CMD is really hopping these days. If you haven't heard already, CMD now represents the entire line of Royal Model Products in the U.S. This includes all the items we mentioned in the last issue of MMiR. Demand has been high for the line since the acquisition was announced over the summer. We simply can not say enough good things about Royal Models. We have



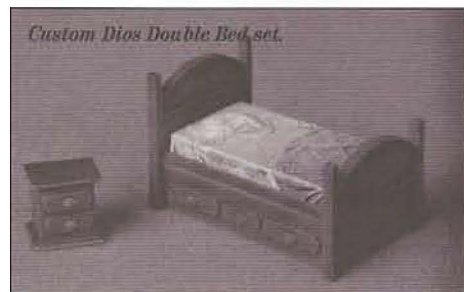
Top: The Stormer Star Streak; middle, the Archer 17 pounder self-propelled gun with detail; above and right, the great big ol' Scammel tank transporter.



Commander's Char 2C.



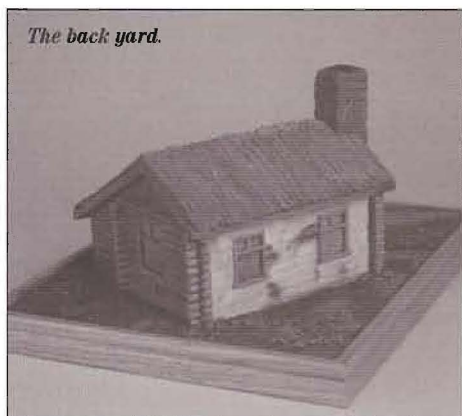
Custom Dios Bedroom Furniture.



Custom Dios Double Bed set.



Custom Dios Russian Hut.



The back yard.



Custom Dios Bridge.

seen almost all the items in the line and we enthusiastically recommend all of it. Sit down right this minute and write for their product listing and catalog.

Recently announced items from Royal are **stowage sets for the StuG F** (No. 134) and the **StuG G** (No. 130). The sets appear to be for the DML and Tamiya kits respectively. Each is composed of resin helmets, bags, boxes, cans and other bits you might find stowed on the outside of your favorite StuG. A photo-etched fret also is included to make up the small welded racks sometimes seen on these vehicles. Prices are TBA.

In other news, CMD is now representing the **Precision** line of resin artillery pieces. Availability and pricing have all changed and full details of this are contained in the CMD/Precision ad on page 36. We are currently working on Precision's 17cm field piece and it is truly one of the nicest resin kits we have ever seen. Good show CMD!

MR Models has also joined the CMD line-up. This is mostly conversion sets and we do know they have an interior for the M88 in the line. We'll bring you more dope as it becomes available.

The **Scratchyard/New Connection** line continues to grow and we now have stock numbers on some of the items announced in the last issue.

NC 3502 is the **SiG 33 conversion** for the DML Hetzer. NC 3503 is the **2cm Flak-Vierling on the T-34** (as seen in Spielberg's *Schwere Jagdpanzer*). NC 3504 is a **8cm rocket launcher on Maultier conversion kit**. We believe this will be the R-Vielfachwerfer used by the SS. The rockets are similar to those found on the Russian katyusha launcher. NC 3513 will be the basic **BergeHetzer** conversion without the winch and spade to create the engineer vehicle. Also for the DML Hetzers. NC 3515 is a conversion kit for the **233 armored car**. This is the assault gun version of the 8-wheeled armored car, for the Tamiya kit.

Two more conversions round out the Hetzer scene. These are NC 3524 **Recce Hetzer with 2cm Flak 38** and NC 3525 **Recce Hetzer with 7.5 cm KwK**. Again, both for the DML kits.

All these items are scheduled for late '96/early '97 release and prices are TBA. Consider the price of the BergeHetzer to be somewhat of a yard-stick at \$59.95.

The New Connection figure range is quite impressive. Look for their item NCHM 04. This is a portrait figure of **SS-Sturmann Rolf Schamp** leaning against his Panzer III. A really super little piece priced at \$11.95.

New items for year's end are: NCHM 05, **Afrika Korps Driver/Co-driver**; NCHM 06, **Afrika Korps Driver**; NCHM 07, **Afrika Korps member, pumping gas**; NCHM 08, **Afrika Korps member with jerry can**; NCHM 09, **Vignette with NCHM 7, 8 and Auxiliary gas station**; NCRP 01 **German tank mechanic lifting up roadwheel**; and NCRP 02 **German tank mechanic changing roadwheel**. Again all prices are TBA, but other single figures in the line retail for \$11.95.

A limited edition figure vignette is planned for late this year. This will be several German tank crewman man-handling a fuel drum onto the back of a Panther. It will include the figgys, the rear deck of the Panther and a small diorama base. The scene is based on a photo in *Sturm & Drang* number 5 on the Panther (page 49, we think).

There is tons more in the line, so make sure to get their listing, too.

CMD is actually participating in the manufacture of many of the above items, lending their considerable expertise in resin casting on the BergeHetzer and the SdKfz. 263.

The latest CMD item, the **M48** is on hold while some of the smaller parts are reworked in photo-etched brass. CMD never puts their release schedule ahead of their quality control, so we await its arrival patiently!

For more information check out the CMD ads on pages 12 and 36.

Commanders Series Models

Commanders has forwarded a photo of their new **Char 2C**. Boy, we wished for a kit of this and now we've got it from two companies! (see MMIR #8) The Commanders kit will be somewhat less expensive than it's French counterpart, weighing in at \$185.00.

Ordering details can be found in their ad on page 53.

Custom Dioramics

In addition to the new items mentioned in their ad CD has the following new bits due up late this year and early next: CD-144 is a ceramic cast **Russian Hut** complete with roof and exterior walls for \$11.95; CD-224 is a set of printed card-stock **Carpets and Rugs**, containing eight different items for \$5.95; CD-332 is a three-piece **Bedroom Furniture set** in resin for \$9.95; CD-145 is a resin cast **Wooden Bridge set** that can be used by itself or with other kits to form a continuous bridge for \$16.95; CD-225, is a printed **Tiled Patio Floor** for \$5.95; and CD-333 is a **Double Bed & 2 Night Tables** for \$9.95.

These guys have developed quite a reputation for value so all the new goodies should be excellent additions to the line.

Also note that they have a new address which is: Custom Dioramics, 1479 Dublin Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2E-3G8. For more info see their ad on page 32.

Dragon

DML didn't seem nearly as excited over their new armor as we did. This stands in contrast to their surprise releases of last year, but hey—a kit's a kit. We'll take it!

All the newest items are in the Imperial Series. First up is 9019, a **Panzer IV F**. This is the ex-Gunze G and it was probably their best (albeit last) kit. The **Panzer IV G** is also listed as a future release as

number 9020. Both kits will retail for \$37.98. Look for the F late this year and the G early '97.

The latest versions of the **Panzer III** were on display in Chicago. These were the H and "Afrika Korps" G models.

9027 is the Alan **Panzer II** souped up with a new figure and box art. This is slated for early next year at \$32.98.

Number 9037 is the **Firefly Ic** with composite hull (or hybrid to you British types). This is the first composite hull in plastic and in the U.S. and Canadian markets the kit will include the turret from the POA Sherman as an added bonus. Markings are supplied for USMC "Black Star" and Canadian vehicles. This kit should be available very soon for \$29.98.

Another version of the Kübelwagen kit is up. This is the ex-Hassegawa kit and Dragon seems to be doing a much better job of pushing it than Hassegawa did. The first version from DML included two figures and this latest incarnation is listed as **DAK Kübelwagen** and it will include a portrait figure of Rommel and some members of his staff. This is item number 9042. Look for a retail of \$29.98 at year's end.

We didn't get any word on additional releases for the year, but DML typically announces new stuff again after the first of the year.

Eduard Model Accessories

Eduard, as usual, does not let up. New this time and at Chicago are (take a deep breath) the following. 35118, **Flak 36/37** is three awesome sheets for the tired old Tamiya kit. It even includes acetate inserts for the azimuth and elevation indicators. 35119 is for Italeri's **Bergepanther**, \$14.99. 35120 spruces up Tamiya's real old **Flakpanzer Gepard** (two good sized sheets) for \$14.99. 35121 is just in time for the CMK **35(t)**, polishing off its few deficiencies for \$11.99 (could 1-to-1 tracks be far behind?). 35122 decks out the Minicraft **Warrior** (again quite timely) for \$14.99. Switching gears somewhat, 35123 makes the **DML OH-6A Cayuse** into a show winner for \$11.99—plus instrument detail. 35124, **M49A2C** makes the AFV Club kit even nicer for \$14.99. Lastly, another very comprehensive kit for the **DML StuG B** for \$14.99.

As we mentioned at the top, Eduard represents the Aires line and they also represent the CMK line of products. CMK has announced an extensive line of figures and accessories. The list is so long we can only offer the briefest of descriptions. And so... F35001 **German Tank Crew**, \$20.99; F35002 **German Infantry Winter**, \$20.99; F35003 **German Paratroops**, \$20.99; F35004 **US Tank Crew**, \$20.99; F35005 **US Paratroops**, \$20.99; F35006 **German Infantry w/overcoats**, \$20.99; F35007 **British Commandos**, \$20.99; F35008 **SS Infantry**, \$20.99; F35009 **German Infantry Equipment #2**, \$16.99; F35010 **US Infantry Equipment WW2**, \$16.99; F35011 **German Infantry Equipment #3**, \$16.99; and F35012 **Modern US Equipment**, \$20.99.

Each of the sets is cast in resin and they all contain at least two figures. Some of the sets include little extras such as a piece of wall or landscape for an instant vignette.

In Chicago, Eduard was showing off the **Brümmbar** kit from CMK. This is another Tamiya conversion with the old kit inside along with new upper hull parts, resin barrel, white metal and photo-etched parts. This is stock number T35007 and price is TBA.

Some of the most exciting news at the Chicago Show (in our humble opinion) was Eduard's rather low-key announcement that CMK will be bringing us the **German Lynx Recce tank**. It will be a full 1/35th scale plastic kit. Finally! Look for stock number T35012 early in the year. Price is TBA but the 35t was very reasonable in price coming in at under twenty dollars.

Additional new releases to look for in 1997 are T35013, the **VW Kübelwagen Type 82E** and T35014, **VW Kübelwagen Type 87**. Now at first glance these appear to be just more Kübel plastic, but if you have any books on wartime German cars, you may note that the Type 82E was actually a Kübelwagen with a VW "Beetle" body on it (if you really want to get obscure, it was known as the 92SS by the SS and the Type 51 in post-war manufacture). The Type 87 was a four-wheel drive version based on the Schwimmwagen chassis, also with the Beetle body. Very, very cool. Prices are TBA.

For address info on Eduard see their ad on page 9.

Jaguar & Kirin

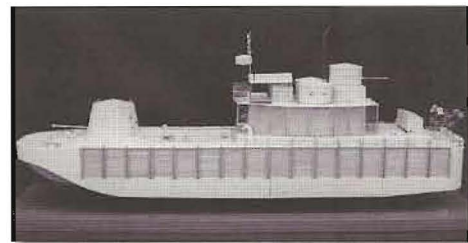
Along with a veritable flood of new figure releases (many of which appear in Mini-Men #10 and #11), Jaguar has announced a full interior set for the **Tamiya StuG III G**. It will include a full drivers and fighting compartment for \$45.98. Stock number 63515. Number 63516 is the same deal for the **DML StuG III D**. Also \$45.98.

Jaguar is found at your favorite hobby joint in the U.S. and in the UK they are represented by Cromwell.

Kirin has also been piling on the figgys. Lots of large scale items, but one conversion set caught our eye. This is the **Super Jeep conversion** for the old Tamiya Mutt kit. Apparently, a Marine unit in the Gulf found a new use for these old guys in the form of a souped version with a roll cage, grenade launcher and fat tires. 28523 is an all resin kit that retails for \$29.98.

Nimix

The Spanish manufacturer Nimix has forwarded photos of their latest full resin kit, a **Vietnam era Mark 5 Monitor** in 1/35th scale. Needless to say it's BIG man! It measures about eighteen inches long and about six inches wide. The body of the kit is resin, but all of the

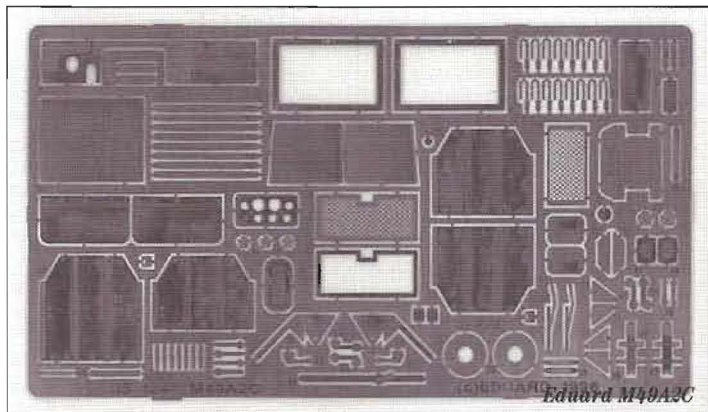


RPG side screens are supplied in photo-etched brass, as is the rear-mounted winch. Quite a stunning model.

Pricing information is TBA, but check with their U.S. distributor, Red Lancers (see ad on page 9) or direct at Nimix, APDO.45.117, 28090 Madrid, Spain. Tel./Fax 1-352-81-39.



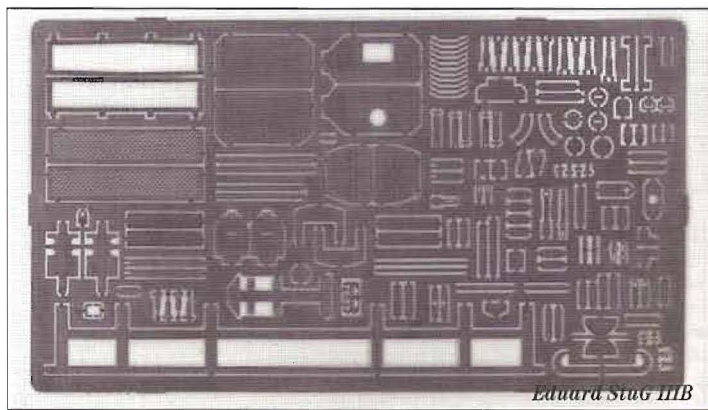
DML's Panzer IIC.



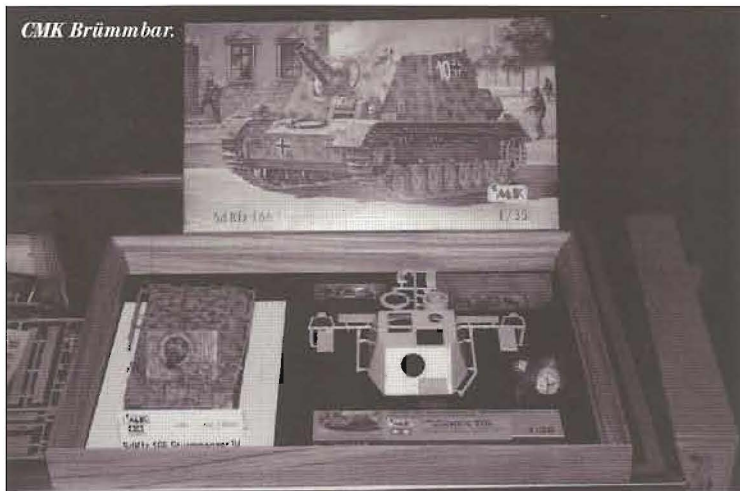
Eduard M49A2C



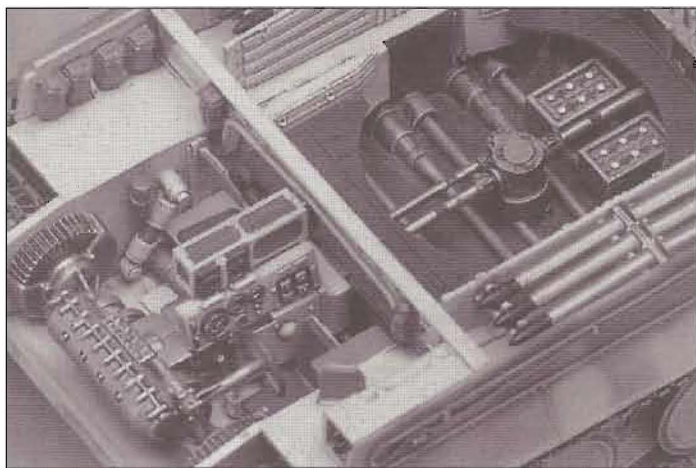
DML's Panzer III G.



Eduard StuG IIB



The Kirin Super Jeep.



The shots at left show the very tasty looking interior in the Minicraft early Tiger I kit.

North Coast Models

North Coast manufactures a serious looking **spray booth**. It's made of heavy gauge sheet metal and a Schwarteneggarion looking 495 cfm blower system. That translates to about 200 linear feet per minute. Whoo-hoo! The unit also includes a dual fluorescent lighting fixture (with two GE Brightstik bulbs), a multiple outlet box, and our favorite feature, a standard



removable 10 x 20 inch furnace filter. It's good to know that someone out there is using their noggin! It measures 25"W x 22"H x 28"D overall and the working chamber is 24"W x 18"H x 16"D. The booth comes fully assembled for \$475.00.

North Coast also offers a thingee called the **Microblaster TX**. This is a small (23"W x 21"H x 19"D) chamber equipped with interior gloves (like something out of a sci-fi movie) and a blasting pencil. The entire system is self-enclosed and the specs state that the unit can be used to remove paint, glue or decals without harming what's underneath. The Microblaster TX requires its own air supply and vacuum cleaner and retails for \$225.00.

North Coast wants you to know that they accept

both MasterCard and VISA and they can be contacted at P.O. Box 31, McKees Rocks, PA 15136. (412) 331-9970.

Maxtrax

Maxtrax offers a fairly extensive line of 1/16th scale kits, mostly centering around the Sherman. They also offer a 1/16 German Elephant and are the producers of Brent Nelson's great 1/16 scale 251D half-track.

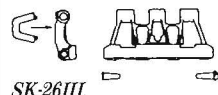
They have let us in on some of their new accessories. We have received samples of **Cobblestone Street section** (about 6 x 6 inches in resin), **Sand Bags** (little hand-made cloth bags—neat), and **Barbed Wire** (about 18 inches). Price on these items is TBA.

One last item is **German WWII MG 34 and MG 42 ammo**. These are 1/16 scale individual rounds with the clips installed. It sounds slightly insane, but think of using them on a figure or vehicle and getting an absolutely realistic drape. A bag of 100 rounds with clips, 25 empty shell casings, and 25 empty clips goes for \$10.00, plus \$3.00 for shipping and handling.

For more information on Maxtrax contact them at 226A North Bridge Street, Grand Ledge, MI 48837. (517) 622-1187.

ModelKasten

Some interesting developments from the maniacs at MK. The flagships of the their workable line, SK-1, SK-2 and SK-3, will now have a variety of accessory items to enhance their already considerable usefulness. These sets are the late, early and transport versions of the **Tiger I tracks**. What's new is that they will now be compatible with MK's own drive sprockets, idler wheels, road wheels, and rotation adapters. The sets will still come with the standard assembly jig and some spare links.



We don't know yet how these items will be offered.

We think (who cares!) this is a good idea due to the proliferation of Tiger I middy style kits and the fact that the Tiger I E can now be found at bargain prices.

In other developments, we are starting to see some new items. We have info on several new products, but unfortunately we can only fill you in on what's new through the end of this year. We'll update you again in #11.

MK has at last given us the **36cm version of the Panzer III track**. This will be SK-26III and will be pinned and functional like the rest of the line and include hollow guide horns. The set will include enough links for Panzer IIIs and early StuGs with drive sprocket adapters and differential covers for the DML kits. Price is TBA.

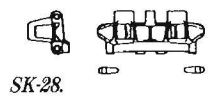
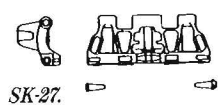
SK-27 is the **Panzer IV final model**. This is the late-war solid horned track with funky holes in the cleats. Look for this to include that nifty idler wheel adapter and a drive sprocket adapter for the new Tamiya kit. Price TBA.

SK-28 is for the **early model Hetzers**. The set will include drive sprockets and idler wheel adapters. All for the DML kits. Price is also TBA.

Look for MK products all over the place.

Minicraft

Minicraft rather subtly blew the lid off the armor world in Chicago. They did so by showing (and now shipping) their **early Tiger I kit**. How, you say? Well,



this \$55.00 kit comes with a *complete interior*, including engine, engine compartment, transmission and fighting compartment. Add link-to-link tracks AND a sheet of photo-etched brass and we'd say you've got news baby!

It is most impressive to see all this complexity in plastic. They really did their homework here. This is about the most ambitious armor kit we've ever seen. Consider that gathering all these items from the various after market companies (plus a kit) would most likely set you back around \$170.00 including tax.

The kit builds into the early Tiger I and includes the Feifel air cleaners, slotted tracks and extra pistol port. Look for this kit in the shops right now and be advised it will probably go quick. Look for stock number 1348.

For 1997, Minicraft has announced both a **M18** (number 1375) and a **M51 Sherman Tank** (number 1373). Tentative retail on these items is \$92.00. No precise word on when these will be available, but we'll keep you posted.

Tamiya

Tamiya kept up its years long tradition of announcing new armor at Chicago with the introduction of its IS III tank. It didn't arrive until about half way through the show, but it had been heavily rumored in the weeks just prior to the event. Well, it's a beauty



all right, with all that detail we've come to know and love. The turret texture was particularly stunning. The kit features vinyl tracks and includes a figure. The official tag for the model is: **Russian Heavy Tank JS Stalin**. It will be stock number 35211, with a January release date. Price is TBA.

Tamiya also had its new **Panzer IV H** on display. This features the outside auxiliary muffler and a full set of Schurzen this time. This is stock number 35209 and its available now for \$43.00.

Also shipping right about now is the **Churchill Mk. VII**. This is a re-release of their earlier Crocodile, but this is only the gun tank. The kit now includes a mini-vignette with the crew (3 figs.) and a French farmer. There's even a little farmer's cart with wine bottles. Stock number 35210 retails for \$39.00.



These guys are always throwing in a new figure set to "go with." With the Panzer IV H in mind comes the **German Soldiers at Field Briefing** set. This is a five-figure set decked out in winter garb along with a German Shepherd and a stove. Stock number 35212, price TBA.

Testors/Italeri

Always the low-key ones, get ready to have Testors blow you away this year. Never ones to be completely obsessed with "high-tech," Testors has never-the-less continued to produce low-cost decent quality kits for the armor lover. Their partnership with the Russian firm Zvesda has all but assured a steady stream of products. Nifty, keeno, cool? You bet!

Here's what's up. All the following are for late '96 or '97 (that's all we know, so far) and all prices are TBA. But do consider this: they announced the Oshkosh

Truck last year at Chicago and at that time they stated that the vehicle had not yet been measured. In spite of that, we saw plastic by late September. We think that's fairly impressive.

Late '96 should bring 0294, **Opel Blitz Flak Truck**. Obviously the flat bed Opel, but no word on which Flak gun it will mount. 0296 will be a **Pacific Sherman M4A3**.

Limited Edition re-releases in late '96 are 0212, 38t; 0219, **Crusader**; 0226, **Dodge Ambulance**; and 0241, **Bedford Truck**.

New '97 items are 0224, **Leopard I**; 0298, **M-978 Oshkosh Fuel Truck**; 0299, **Sturmtyger**; 0355, **RSO with Pak 40**; SWS (that's *Schwerewehrmaschschlepper* to you) with **Panzerwerfer 42**; and 0357, **3.7cm Flak 43**.



And rumor also has it that the SWS line will continue with at least the 3.7cm version.

1997's limited edition re-releases are 0233, **Chevrolet Truck**; 0244, **Chaffee**; and 0317, **Zündapp Motorcycle**.

We'll keep you up to date as news develops.

The Tank Workshop

Make sure to check out the completely updated list of TWS products on page 49 (primarily because we

Military Miniatures For The Collector

The Red Lancers

Accurate Armor	Hecker Goros	Poste Militaire
ADV/Azimut	HK-35	Present Arms
Albion	Hornet	Resicast
ALBY Miniatures	Ironside	Roll Call
Almond	JJ Model	Sauders
Amati 120mm	Jordi Rubio	Scale Link
Andrea	JMP	S.M.A.
Aquila	La Compania	Segorn
Border	Le Cimier	Shennandoah
Clydecast 90mm	Lionheart	Show Model
Cromwell	Lucchetti	Soldat
Dartmoor	Mascot	Somov
David Parkins	Metal Models	Sovereign
DES Kit	Mike Roberts	Thistle
D.F. Grieve	MK-35	Tiny Troopers
3-D Miniatures	Mil-Art	Ulrich Puchala
Flightpath	Mili Men	Verbist 120mm
F.M. Beneito	Model Cellar	Verlinden 120mm
Fonderie	Nemrod/Historex	Vulcan
Fort Royal	N.W. Frontier	Warriors
Fruilmodellismo	Pegsso	Wolf
Fusilier	Phoenix 80mm	

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<http://www.magi.com/~eduard/>

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don't feel like typing all that copy...). These guys are always sneaking up on us with neat new stuff. There's so much new, we just picked a few out for comment. We really liked the transmission sets, a few of which are pictured here.



Panther tranny.

There is also a great little series of stowage boxes for the **Panzer III and StuG** of the type seen during Operation Blue in 1942. Great for multi-vehicle dioramas.

Many of the bits strike quite a clever cord, such as the burnt-out roadwheel sets. It's the kind of thing that seems so

obvious, yet no one has thought of it before. We have seen each of the items and we pronounce it all terrific looking and just this side of stupid cheap. Their drop dead gorgeous **Panzer II Engine** is all of \$6.00 and the **burnt out Sherman wheels** retail for only \$8.00!



Panzer II engine.

Look out too, for their great **interior (complete with every darn thing) for the Tamiya Tiger II**.

We rarely (if ever) recommend blind ordering from anyone, but we know you won't be disappointed with any of the TWS products. What ARE you waiting for?

The Show Modelling

It's been a while since we've been able to bring you up-to-date information on this Japanese producer of photo-



VP's new Panther engine module.

etched brass sets. Many of the new sets were on display in Chicago, so we are happy to give you this current list:

SH-075, **Panzer IV Ausf. J Detail Set Vol.1** (Tamiya); SH-076, **Panzer IV Ausf. J Detail Set Vol.2** (Tamiya); SH-078, **M4 Sherman Detail Set** (DML/Tamiya); SH-080, **Japanese Type 97 Light Tank Detail Set** (Tamiya); SH-081, **Hetzer Detail Set** (DML); SH-082, **Panzer Mk. III Detail Set** (DML); SH-083, **Jagdtiger Detail Set** (DML); SH-084, **Tiger I Early Detail Set** (backdates Tamiya); SH-085, **StuG III Ausf. G Zimmerit Sheet** (DML); SH-086, **StuG III Ausf. G Detail Set** (DML); SH-087, **Panzer III Ausf. M/N** (DML); SH-088, **Panzer III Ausf. M/N hooks, etc.** (DML); SH-089, **Panzer III Ausf. M/N Turret Schurzen** (DML); SH-090, **Sdkfz. 124 Wespe** (Tamiya); SH-091, **StuG. III Schurzen** (Tamiya); SH-092, **Flak 38 20mm Shield & Equipment** (Tamiya); SH-093, **Kettenkraftrad** (we're not completely sure what this is); SH-094, **Sdkfz. 223** (Tamiya); and SH-095, **Sdkfz. 261 Radio Car Conversion Set** (for Tamiya 223).

Most of these are now available and the precise retail will vary. Check with your favorite retailer.

The VLS Corp

The boys at VLS always lay out a nice spread for Chicago. There were just a few new items on display as they gear up for the year. If you don't know this already, the entire VP facility was integrated with the VLS operation in the U.S. early this fall. The moral of this story: watch out for these guys. The dust has pretty much just settled and even though they still continue to release new items each month, we think that there will be some significant activity in the coming year.

With their new office/warehouse/production facility on line (you should see this place, it's positively awesome) they are capable of amazing us for some time to come.

Their new **Tiger I detail set** was on display. This is a hefty set composed of a huge etched sheet and a generous amount of resin pieces. All kinds of stuff is provided like headlights, tools, towing eyelets, headphones and ammo bags. An open stowage bin is provided and various gear is molded into the opening. The etched sheet includes all the fenders and lids for the stowage bins. This is number VP117 and the retail is a reasonable \$19.95.

They also continue to do the "Super Value" thing, with a whole pant load of items provided for one slim price. There are several ammo and gear sets now available and one of the latest is a **German Head Set** (VP 1186). You get 25 heads for \$11.95. They seem to be releasing something like this every other month or so.

A future armor item is a real pretty **engine module for the Tamiya Panthers**. This includes the fan housing and engine details. Price on this guy is TBA.

For more information on The VLS Corp see their ad on the inside back cover of this issue.



VP's extensive Tiger I detailing set.



Book Reviews

Military Ordinance Special 17

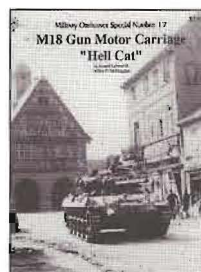
M18 Gun Motor Carriage "Hell Cat"

By Ronald Lehman & Jeffrey D. McKaughan

Darlington Productions, Inc.

Soft cover, 24 pages, B&W throughout.

\$7.95



Note: this is only one of many Museum Ordinance Specials available from Darlington. Space permitted only one review this issue, but we will give you a full run-down on specials 13-16 and 18 in MMiR number 11.

THIS 24 PAGE BOOKLET IS GOING to be popular with those who purchase the new M18

tank destroyer from AFV-Club (when it does finally arrive). Typical of this series, it is mostly a picture book. It does have a rudimentary text describing some of the history of the Hellcat but it spends much of the time bashing the very existence of tank destroyers, including the M18. However, the text will not be the reason people buy this book, the photos do the work and make it a must have for any detail freak. The suspension and tracks are well covered as is most of the crew area inside, this being accomplished with photos of a restored tank as well as both factory shots and liberal doses of tech manual images. We came away with a desire for a few more photos, particularly ones showing the whole vehicle from the front and rear. An overhead shot of the entire tank would also help place the close-up images better in the mind, or at least a good line drawing would have helped. A minor nit-pick to be sure. For space reasons we presume, the M39 is not covered and there are few shots of the Hellcat in combat settings. We highly recommend this book to both model builders and fans of the M18.

M3 Halftrack in Action

By Jim Mesko

Squadron Signal Publications

Armor Number 34

Soft cover, 50 pages,

B&W with color center section.

\$7.95



THE LATEST BOOK IN THE ever familiar Squadron format covers the M2 and M3 series of American halftracks. Mesko follows the company pattern with a brief

development history and separate text sections for each variant shown. The pictures include a lot of "not new to us" ones but there was plenty more that we had not seen. The color center spread artwork is well done and will give anybody with a closet full of Tamiya M3s some inspiration to get off the old duff and master some plastic. There are a few line drawings scattered about and a bunch of smaller explanatory drawings that do the work of showing how to identify the vehicle types.

In addition to the M2/M2A1 and M3/M3A1, there are sections on the M9 and M5/M5A2, M4/M4A1 and M21 mortar carriers; T12 and T48 gun motor carriages; the T30 and T19 howitzer motor carriages; and the M15/M15A1 and M13/M16 anti-aircraft platforms. More briefly shown are things like the T54, T59, T60, and T68 and their sub variants. Combat photos fill the back of the book with the emphasis on WWII vehicles. Plenty here for the diorama worshiper. Brief mention is given to some of the post war users of the halftracks that survived to be reused many times. Roughly one photo per nationality.

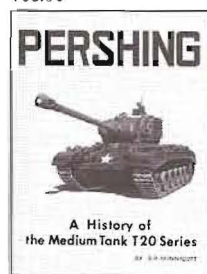
This book is a good overview of a complicated subject.

Several of the vehicles in it could fill a book of their own so we must compliment the author for condensing the history and details down to size. For those without references on these vehicles it is a must have and we predict it may help direct some long overdue attention from the after market community. Recommended.

Pershing A History of the Medium Tank T20 Series

By R.P. Hunnicutt
Feist Publications

Hard cover with dust jacket
240 pages, B&W with four color plates.
\$65.00



O.K., so this isn't what you'd call a timely review. The Pershing has been in re-release for some time now. What's that? You hadn't heard? All right then...

A long time ago (in a galaxy far, far away), make that 1970, way before Richard Hunnicutt became a legend with his series of books on U.S. armor, there was the Pershing book.

You could always tell the true tank geek by whether or not he had managed to procure a copy of this book in its original printing. Interest in the Pershing has always been steady, but it started to peak over the last few years. Especially with the release of the DML kits. So, why didn't someone just up and reprint the book? Well, it seems the negatives for the book (what the printed image is based on) were destroyed in a fire a while back. Not good.

Uwe Feist, the original publisher, recently received permission from the copyright holder (Presidio Press) to reprint the book from an pristine copy. Technology being what it is these days, the pages were electronically scanned, new negatives made, and behold, a book was born.

Now, we have compared this new volume with the original and we pronounce it A-O.K. We scrutinized most of the photos and found the most minute of differences in only two!

The story of the T20 series is every bit as fascinating as the others in the series. The development is accompanied by dozens and dozens of line drawings and tech manual photos, too. There is a ton of scratch-building ideas within.

As usual this one probably won't last long, so snatch it while you can.



Ground Power
June 1996 (No. 25)
Delta Publishing
Soft cover, 152 pages,
B&W with color fold out.
\$32.98

Ground Power
July 1996 (No. 26)
Delta Publishing
Soft cover, 148 pages,
B&W with color fold out.
\$32.98



Ground Power
August 1996 (No. 27)
Delta Publishing
Soft cover, 152 pages,
B&W throughout.
\$32.98

Ground Power
September 1996 (No. 28)
Delta Publishing
Soft cover, 152 pages,
B&W with color intro.
\$32.98

AS PROMISED, WE CONTINUE TO UPDATE YOU ON THE CURRENT issues of Ground Power. These are kind of weird reviews for us. Ground Power is essentially a magazine, but it looks like a book, but it comes out once a month... but...



but... Confused? Don't be. Just read on.

Numbers 25 and 26 are a two volume set on the Tiger I. More crap on the Tiger? Now hold on. There's some pretty interesting stuff in here. The first book is divided by the individual units that fielded the Tiger and this in turn is divided by fronts. There were many photos here that we had not seen before, including a series apparently shot in Italy. Hmmmm... Both books contain a full-color center fold-out section with eight color plates.

The second book (No. 26) is mostly detail oriented. All of the shots are either mid-range or close-up shots. The second half of this book contains dozens

of line drawings illustrating all of the little details and differences between the variants. This puts us in mind of the *Achtung Panzer* series. The section is well-done and is further supplemented with photos of existing vehicles. One interesting drawing illustrates the front armored apron installed on the Tiger I prototype (betcha didn't know that!). Modelers should find all this very useful.

Number 25 is titled *American Military Vehicles of WWII*. All of the photos are of U.S. tanks all right, but not all of them are in U.S. service. All tanks are covered from the very early types right through the experimental heavies. Highlights include several color shots in the intro, terrific over head shots of the M5, some very crispy pics of the Shermys, and rare photos of the T28 heavy. All and all worth the asking price at least.

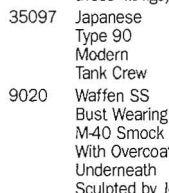
BECAUSE DETAIL MAKES A DIFFERENCE



35090

- 35084 Allgemeine SS Party Official
- 35086 Waffen SS Slovenian, Strazmojster Italy 1944-45
- 35087 Waffen SS Grenadier/Camo. Smock
- 35088 Wehrmacht Oberleutnant, Legion Freies Indien Normandy, 1944
- 35090 "Down by the Sea" 1/35 Vignette U-Boat Crew (3 figs + sea wall)
- 35093 Panzer Crew Member leaning on tank
- 35094 Waffen SS Ski-Trooper
- 35095 Afrika Korps Lt. Phalange Africaine

- 35096 Waffen SS Tank Crew (Summer Dress 4 1/2 figs)
- 35097 Japanese Type 90 Modern Tank Crew
- 9020 Waffen SS Bust Wearing M-40 Smock With Overcoat Underneath Sculpted by John Rosengrant



- 9021 Fallschirmjager Bust
- 9022 German Mercenary - 30 Years War - John Rosengrant



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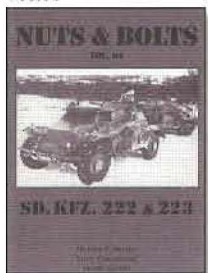
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Number 28 is titled *Rommel's Panzer Corps 1942* and as such is solely devoted to the desert stuff. This one also starts out with a color section and this contains several color vehicle plates, too. The photos showcase tanks of both sides with a keen selection of Panzer III, M3 Grant and Sherman shots. This volume is unique in that it contains a fair amount of text. This is supplemented with a number of maps and the whole thing is probably real interesting. Unfortunately the whole shebang is in Japanese. Too bad these aren't available in English. Oh well... We still recommend them all, if your pocketbook can accommodate them and the subject strikes your fancy. Look for another update in number 11.

Nuts & Bolts Vol. 4 SD. KFZ. 222 & 223

By Heiner F. Duske, Tony Greenland
and Frank Schulz
36 pages, B&W throughout.
\$20.00



THIS IS THE THIRD IN THE SERIES of "buddy books" from the above mentioned gentlemen. Timed to coincide with the re-release of the Tamiya kits, it offers up some highly useful photos of these German armored cars. Relying again on shots of existing vehicles, the authors have done an admirable job of seeking out the remaining examples—and the list is short. All of the many small details are shown and all the photos showcase the "modelers eye view" (we just made that up).

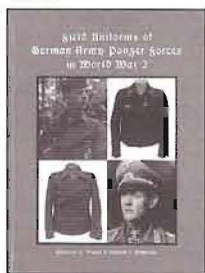
Five-view plans of both cars are shown in 1/35 scale and a thorough background is provided as are a list of all the various types and their production numbers. One other cool thing is a list of the world's existing vehicles, their location and condition. All of this is in

both German and English text to boot. You'll find this a very handy book, for either the Tamiya kits or that big Jaguar offering.

The address again on the series is: Frank Schulz, Müllerstraße 6, 29525 Uelzen, Germany. The price does include shipping and handling.

Field Uniforms of German Army Panzer Forces in World War 2

By Michael H. Pruett
and Robert Edwards
J.J. Fedorowicz Publishing
Hard cover, 314 pages, B&W and color
\$66.00



THIS IS NOT A NEW BOOK BY ANY means, being dated 1993. We recently added it to our collection and we thought we'd bring it to your attention.

This is one of the more (if not the) comprehensive works on the subject, covering every aspect of the Panzer forces, including a few you might not think of. Along with the traditional breakdown of

uniform items, the uniforms of the Armor Troops, Antitank Units, Armored Railway Units, Motorcycle Units and nine other individual units are covered. This is followed (if that's not enough) by 10 Annex sections, a glossary and a comprehensive bibliography. Wow!

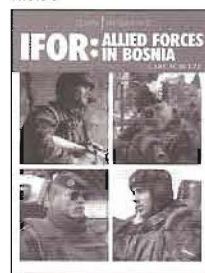
Along the way there are a ton of outstanding photos and the authors seem to have an eye for the unusual—which we love. They are lots of fascinating shots of strange uniform combos.

Annex 1 is the color section and several different types are illustrated. Many of the shots fill the entire page.

This would be a great addition to your shelf and you'll be reaching for it for years to come.

IFOR: Allied Forces in Bosnia

By Carl Schulze
Windrow & Greene Publishing
Europa Militaria No. 22
Soft cover, 64 pages, full color throughout.
\$15.95




MODERN ARMOR NUTS REJOICE! There's gold in these here pages. Who would have thought that one day we'd have reference photos of former Warsaw Pact and NATO forces together in the same place? The world is one wacky place.

W&G and Mr. Schulze have given us an excellent overview of the Allied

Implementation Force (IFOR, get it?) deployed in Bosnia. Each page contains one or two large color photos illustrating either a uniform or vehicle of IFOR. This is super cool stuff man! It's a little creepy to see the various vehicles actually in the field and in combat situations. The photos are a wealth of weathering and stowage detail for the modern armor nut. Almost everything is pictured, too. There's MIs, Leopards (courtesy of the Dutch), Challengers, Centuros (Italian wheeled MBT) and even the odd BMP and BTR-70. We'd really like to know what those weird vent things are on the sides of the MIAs...

Great uniform photos abound, too. We get to see the Canadians, Malaysians and Ukrainians decked out for war—no blue beanie here. A first for many of these cats (the Malaysians look pretty chilly).

We think particularly special accolades should go to Mr. Schulze, whose enthusiasm propelled him, his Mercedes and his camera into a war zone to create this book. Three cheers.

An all around great effort. A terrific value, too at sixteen bucks. 



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Double Takes

Light My Fire

In November 1942, the German Army developed an idea to field a flame-throwing tank for use in close in fighting such as that seen on the Russian front. The Panzer III was selected as the vehicle to carry the new weapon. The new Panzer III was designated the "F-1."

100 Panzer III M's built by MAIG were delivered to Wegmann Tanks Works for the conversion to the flame-throwing version. All vehicles were delivered without the main gun, since after all this is the only difference in appearance between the gunned version and the flame-throwing version. In addition to the difference in gun, the F-1 carried 30mm appliqué armor plating on the glacis and hull front, and carried two types of radio equipment, the FUG 5 and the FUG 2. Other than these differences the two are identical.

In place of the Panzer III's main 50 mm gun a barrel with a 14mm flame-throwing jet. This fire breathing Panzer III had a maximum combat weight of 23 tons and a crew of three, this was only slightly heavier than it's gunned sister while carrying one fewer crewman. To propel the burning oil, a DKW, 2 stroke motor was used to power the flame-thrower. The capacity of oil carried was 1,000 liters, allowing for 70 to 80, 2 or 3 second flame bursts. The maximum range of each burst was at first

advertised as 55-60 meters but in thick of battle really only averaged more like 35 to 40 meters.

The first vehicles delivered proved a disappointment as a result of the reduced range of the gun. None saw service in Stalingrad as was originally hoped; however many were used on the Russian front, with some seeing action at Kursk. As a result of their poor combat performance most were recalled and refitted with the normal 50 mm main gun, although in 1944, 35 vehicles were once again fitted with the flame-thrower at Hitler's request (go figure).

DML's rendition of the F-1 is great, but is basically identical to it's earlier Panzer III M/N kit, which is the old Gunze kit. I hope we all know this by now? The only difference is the added sprue for the flame-throwing barrel, which means once again, there's tons of extra stuff left over. Included in the extra stuff are Schurzen side rails, but unfortunately no Schurzen like the nifty ones from the M/N kit.

The kit was identical in terms of construction to the M/N and I liked the kit a lot. My only gripe is that DML only provides markings of one vehicle. Oddly enough in all my reference materiel I can't

find a single photo of the vehicle depicted by the model. Instead there are several good photo's of vehicle #1825 whose numbers are done in a colorful yellow ochre outlined in black, and another vehicle, # 411 whose numbers are red with white outline. Not sure why these versions weren't included on the decal sheet.

All in all the kit is a hit in terms of what you get for your money, and would be a great addition to anyone into German armor.

Get the H outta here

It's variant city man, and I'm the mayor! DML has continued (and continues) its permutations of the Panzer III with the H model. This is the Gunze J model with a sprue or two inside to convert the kit to the H model.

The H is sort of a transitional Panzer III. It differs from the earlier G primarily around the engine deck, the H having the tropical raised engine filter covers. The H is virtually indistinguishable from the late G and the engine covers were first introduced

(continued on page 16)

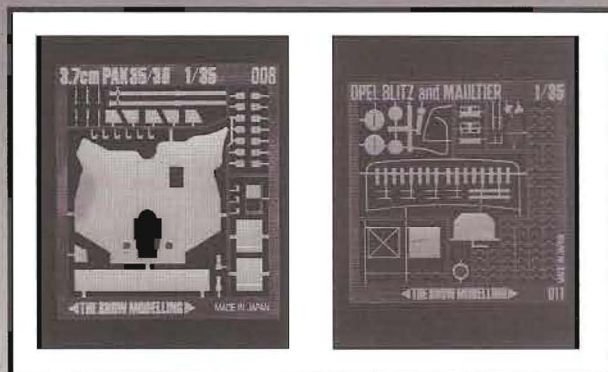


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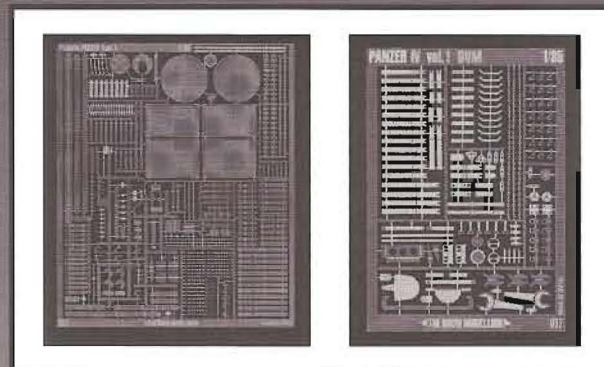
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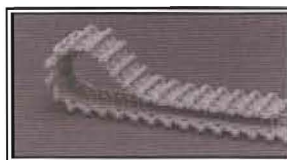
Due to the huge success of our previous ModelKasten sale, we've decided to do it again to kick off the new year. Santa's got a ton of merchandise left-over and he's **letting it all go at 20% off!** Santa must clean out his sleigh, so don't be left out. Yahoo!

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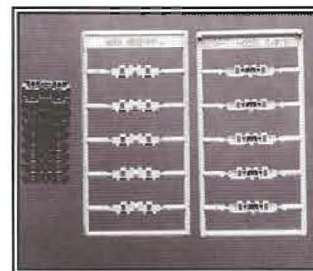
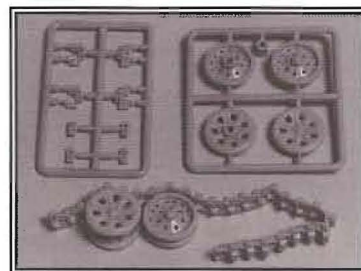
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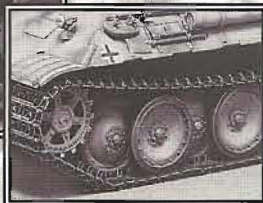
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on the G as the late "tropical" version. Another distinguishing feature is the later style drive sprocket and you could do some neat backdating by adding the older sprocket. There were lots of weird in between looking vehicles created by modernizing older tanks. The G, F and H were all armed with the 50mm as opposed to the Es 37mm gun. The 37mm was mounted in an integral mantlet, while the 50mm was mounted in a large exterior mantlet.

DML gives you all the bits needed to create the version on the box top. The differences between the G, H and J versions are at best a bit on the fuzzy side and to be honest, DML could have just given us the one kit. But they do their best to define the kits by offering a variety of interesting markings. The H is marked as an Afrika Korps vehicle. I liked building it and I have no major gripes. Little nit-picks are mainly found in the turret. The cupola is on the weak side in terms of its molding. This was a metal part in the old Gunze kit and the plastic one doesn't quite compare. Also the Gunze turret just has holes in either side, rather than true openings for the doors.

I'm looking forward to seeing DML's Panzer III G and I hope there are a few more parts inside to make an earlier vehicle. What I'm really pining for is an E model. Are you guys listening?

—Tom Jett

DML Imperial Series
PzKpfw. III, Ausf. H Sd.Kfz 141
Kit number 9029
\$39.98

DML Imperial Series
Flammpanzer III (F-1)
Kit number 9017
\$39.98

Lately, a Jagdpanther

In the "what took them so long department," Tamiya has released another variant of the Panther. It's the Jagdpanther and interestingly, it is not the same as either of the two DML releases. It represents the final production version of the



vehicle and as such it has the large heater vent on the back deck and the fire suppressant exhaust stacks. Tamiya even includes the curved top tubes. These were missing in the earlier Italeri kit.

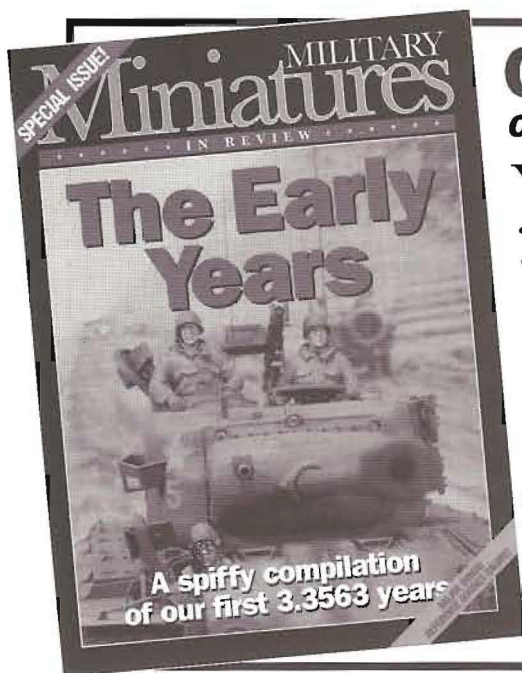
As you'd guess, the only thing unique to this kit is the upper hull and gun. All the other parts are identical to the late G kit. They did their usual competent job on the kit and there are some great details present. A basic gun breech assembly is provided, but this is the only interior component supplied (hey guys, you spoiled us with that Sturmtyger). Like the Jagdtyger, this vehicle has that big-ass back door to see through. A nice selection of periscopes is provided to poke out of the top of the hull. The hull texturing and weld detail are superb.

I have nothing bad to say about this kit, but because I'm the world's biggest damn baby, I will say: "I want more Panthers from Tamiya!" Come on guys, do an A or a D, or how about a Bergepanther? Come on! I know you want to... Well anyway, I enjoyed my JP. The only major accuracy nit I could find was that the gun cleaning rod storage tube should be mounted across the back deck on the final version and not the side as shown.

The price of these kit is finally starting to slowly snake down. The stated retail here is \$45.00 rather than the \$53.00 of the Panther Gs.

—Ken Dugan

Tamiya Jagdpanther Late Version
Kit number 35203
\$45.00



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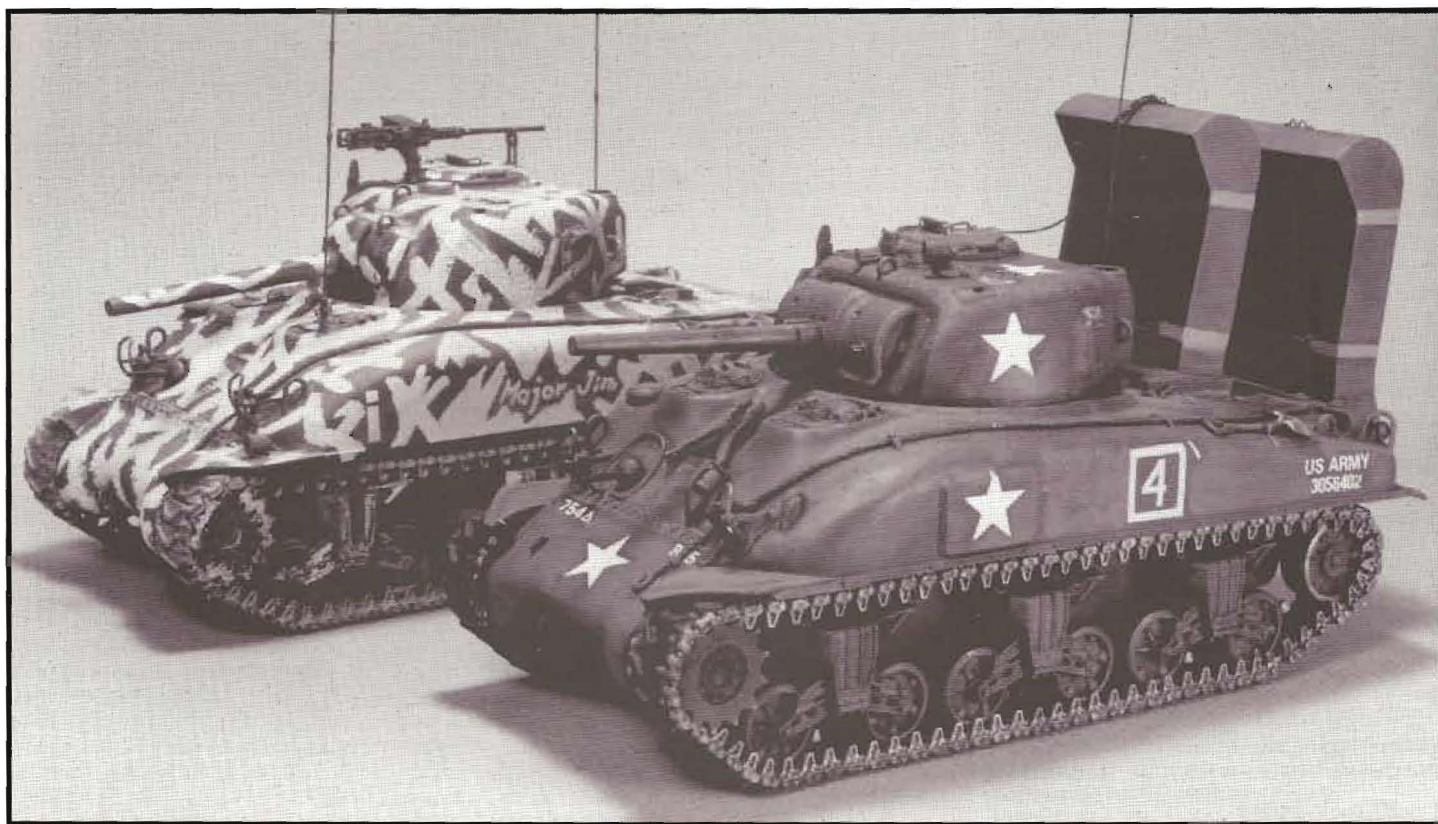
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One from Column A & One from Column B

We give you two
for one on the
new DML M4A1



Lately, many kits are so specialized that we only get one vehicle in a box. There are kits of tanks so esoteric that thousands more models were built than were made of the real thing. So it's a pleasure to occasionally get a new "builder's special" that can produce more than one tank and a tank that was extensively used in combat. The new DML M4A1 is such a kit.

My first thought when I heard the Dragon gang was going to do the M4A1 was "I hope they do the early vision block version as used by the Brits in the Libyan desert." When I saw the artwork in a promotional ad, I was mildly disappointed as that revealed the new Sherman would have the intermediate pattern M4A1 hull minus the vision ports. But then I got one (two actually) and dragged it home for the old touchy-feely. A quick look at the instruction sheet showed that there was the better part of a second tank in the box. Wow!

On my desk was now a pile of tracks (two types, the set of T62s from the M4A4, and new T48 rubber chevron blocks), two noses (three piece from the M4A4, new early one piece), all of the M4A4 turret goodies (almost none of which are used), two types of road wheels (solid spoke type from the M4A4 and a new set of open spoke ones), a full set of appliqué armor panels for the hull and turret, three suspension bogie set-ups, and on it went. I was up to my wazoo in plastic Sherman bits.

My first problem was I couldn't decide which way to build the tank. DML includes three sets of markings that cover the famous "Major Jim" command tank from HQ Company, 2nd Bn, 13th Armored Rgt. of the 1st Armored Div. in Tunisia in early 1943; "Sloppy Joe," another famous tank from the 603rd Tank Bn. on Manus Island in the Pacific, and "Weenie One," which served with the 1st Division in Italy in '44. Of those, I had long wanted to do a copy of Major Jim Simmerman's command tank with the garish mud camouflage. But then I kept looking at pictures of re-manufactured M4A1s in Europe in '44 and '45 and others in the Pacific and thought the model would look cool with all the appliqué and other late features. Plus I could try the wading trunks from Tank Workshop on it too. The DML kit had most of the late stuff already in the box as leftovers and I would only have to scrounge a few bits from my spares. Hmmm... what to do? "Both," I decided.

Early M4A1

I did the early version first, this way I would get used to the kit in its simplest form. The more complicated tank would take less time, if I had some practice.

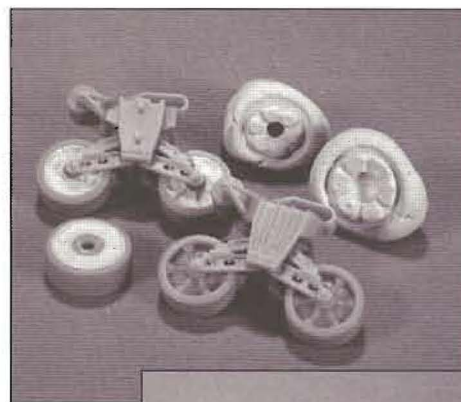
The hull construction was the usual Sherman thing. There are no Italeri sprues in this kit, making it the first all DML M4 effort from the Dragon shop. But DML's mold guys were influenced by the Italeri kit, borrowing the construction method nearly exactly. That means that the parts are virtually interchange-

able with the Italeri ones, so anything made for the old 76mm M4A1, the M36B2, and M32 should fit on this kit.

The hull bottom, and suspension mount pads are devoid of bolt heads, so I added them. I put the early cast nose on the hull front and at the back end drilled out the towing lugs. There are no lugs cast on the nose as there should be, so I made two with thick styrene, drilled the holes, and mounted them on the front.

But the biggest surprise in this kit is that it provides three bogie options, two wheel options, and two track options. This makes it the kit basher special at my house. Why? Because DML gives the late VVS bogie with raised return roller, as in all the Italeri kits, but they added casting marks. Good. They then included an entirely new bogie truck that represents the intermediate pattern brackets with horizontal trailing arm. Better. And they included the parts to do that same bogie with the pillow blocks that raise the return rollers. Best! Whichever you choose, you get a leftover bogie set and you get an extra set of return roller mounts and track springs that could be used to backdate a set of late type trucks in another company's kit. Get the idea?

The suspension goes together easily. You put the suspension arms on the bogie bracket halves, trap the wheels and the volute springs between the halves. I picked the earliest pattern bogie that the kit provides with spoke wheels based on examining the photo published of the actual tank. I left the pivot feature



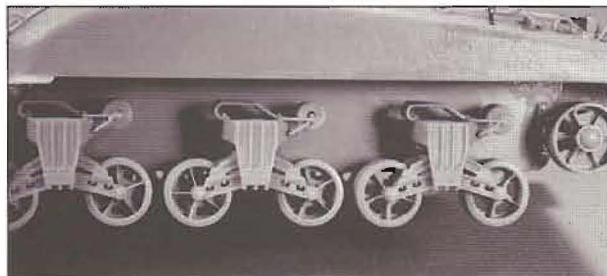
functional, which allows the suspension arms to articulate but this was just to ease painting. The actual arms do not pivot the way the kit simulates them so if you want to show the wheels over rough ground you have to do some surgery to get this right.

The new open spoke wheels have one of the two grease related fittings on one side. This requires that you keep an eye on them so that you don't put this detail on the inside.

Two types of sprocket teeth are included so I chose the fancy type for Major Jim. I mounted the drive sprocket output shaft assemblies on the hull sides but left the sprockets removable to ease track construction. I took care to drill out the hole in the center of the hub. I built and mounted the air filters at the back end of the tank, added a grab handle on the engine access door frame. I didn't fit the idler wheels, again to ease construction of the tracks.

I took the hull top and stared at it a long time. It was bothering me because the slope of the top of the driver's hood bulges seemed too steep and I spent two days trying to calibrate my eyeball. Using other people's drawings and measuring from good side-on photographs led me to the conclusion that the slope of the hood top on a real M4A1 is about 8-8.5 degrees from the horizontal. DML has more than that slope resulting in the front being too low. Look at the ventilator bulge and compare pictures of this area to see what I mean. The solution (hey, it made me happy) was to cut

Above left: my surgery of the hatch hoods is evident here. The antenna on the hatch rim is unique to this particular tank. Note the scrounged tow cable. Middle: turret details include a .50 cal from DML's Pershing, KMC numbers on the turret side and the standard blade sight. The .50 cal support is from OTM. Above right: Here are the epoxy molds I made to impress detail on the backs of the wheels. One for the roadwheels and a bigger one for the idlers. Right: the track for the early M4A1 is the "British" chevron with the bolt heads removed. Below: the new bogies in the kit can be built as the original pattern heavy duty VVS type with low return rollers. The spoke wheels are new to the release.



around the top perimeter of both hood bulges with a razor saw until I had cut all the way around them and back to the turret race splash guard detail. This cut had to be low enough to miss the hatch lip or else the hatches have no support.

Once both hoods were cut I pulled up the front lips and wedged about 2mm of styrene under both to keep

them up. I then filled in the gaps along the sides of each bulge and when all the putty was dry I shaped the bulges with a Dremel tool router bit. This is not an exact science since you have to eyeball the profiles as you grind everything smooth. Once sanded, however, I had hoods with a more accurate slope. I used this effort to remove the dust cover mount rib for the bow machine gun. Not all the tanks in North Africa had gun covers.

Other hull modifications I completed were to remove the spring mounts on top of the driver's hoods since the early hatches didn't have springs. I reshaped the front corners of the hull casting to round them down a bit. I added the angle iron bar located between the hood bulges on the center of the glacis and I made a "comb device" for the transmission nose.

The tracks included are steel chevron T62 type and a new (for DML) T48 rubber chevron block track. The T62 compound rubber/steel narrow chevron pattern is common to British tanks but looks like the U.S. used T54 type. I (foolishly) decided to spend two days taking the bolt heads off the face of each block. Can you say cleanup?

Days later I had a pile of cleaned up track parts and started building sections. The trick is to build blocks and teeth around the sprocket with a few extra links going aft so it's easy to connect them. I make up each block for the straight runs by attaching a guide tooth on each side but on opposite corners. Once I have enough of these made up I can connect the blocks in runs easily and quickly. I make a top run from the sprocket section end to the idler set. I then do the same for the lower half, installing the bends at the front and rear roadwheel as I go. I rarely get the tension to come out right, one block too long or too short is the norm, but I have a trick for a tight track. Once the track is dry I cut the idler axle shaft off and reposition the idler wheel. Build it loose in other words, and then relocate and glue the rear wheel. This works because it duplicates the real function of the adjustable idler wheel.

Left: the finished Major Jim. Don't call it ugly, man! The cracked paint effect was achieved by mixing alcohol and tube type water color paint. It's not particularly attractive, but it is pretty accurate to the real tank. Note the very realistic "sit" of the link-to-link tracks.





Above and above right: the back of Major Jim. I added a few tools from the parts box and OTM straps. The tail light guards were thinned down from the kit parts.

The sections were removed once dry and not reinstalled until the tank and tracks were painted. Link-to-link tracks are a lot of tedious work, but the results are worth it in my opinion. They make into the best looking track going and simulate the way the track sits around the sprocket and idler better than the vinyl one-piece jobbies can. Work, you bet it is, but nice work if you can get it.

The Hull Top

The upper hull is detailed next and that includes putting the fenders on at front and rear, as well as the usual topside junk. I removed the hatch hinges with a knife, installed the kit provided grab handles, and added the two hull top ventilator caps once I figured out which one goes where (look at the instructions carefully). Up front I drilled out the headlight lenses in preparation for insertion of a pair of MV lenses (MV#128) and I used brush guards from the photo-etch set in a DML M4A4 kit. The fender location for the siren is correct for the early tank so all I had to do is drill a hole in the leading edge of the hull for the sirens electrical lead, made from wire. I also removed the triangular fender gussets, which come on the kit but were not used on the early hull. Instead, a metal strip runs under the fender-hull joint to support the outer edge of the fender and these were made from styrene strip.

The engine deck detailing included adding release/lock handles for the filler caps (make five). The rearmost engine deck panel has sideways running grab handles molded in the flush position. I only point this out because some tanks have them running fore and aft. Plus, you will want to cut them off and replace with raised handles if you are going to tie any stowage goodies on the deck. Otherwise, you just cover the engine access hole with the three engine panels. Note also that these are from the original pattern M4A1 and if you use this kit for a late war tank, you might need to change one or more panels. The Italeri M4A1 has the late versions for comparison.

Pioneer tool stowage is the early pattern and DML has replaced the Italeri tools with a mixture of the ones in the M4A4 kit (some bad, some good) and a few new ones. I used the good ones and replaced a couple of things with tools from the spares box. I used brass tie down straps (On the Mark) on the tools.

Right: my re manufactured version. I wanted to do a relatively new vehicle with all the late-war upgrades and features. It represents a tank from the 754th Tank Bn. This is one of the units that received a Presidential Unit Citation for its contribution to the retaking of Manila in early 1945.

The grouser cover ventilator scoops are not correctly shaped and are a problem left over from the M4A4 kits. They have too much angle on top and should be nearly horizontal in profile when viewed from the rear. Since my subject was built without the screens for the ventilator scoop I put a rod in the center of each one to simulate the bolt that passes through it.

The taillight guards were made from the kit parts (they even give you two sets of these), instead of using brass. I just carefully cut them down to thinner stock with a very sharp X-acto blade. Not something most people are in the mood to try but it worked here. DML forgot the tow cable (again!) and even the cable mounts are missing. I stole the cable thread from a Tamiya M48 and the ends from an Italeri Sherman. Final hull details included adding the fire extinguisher handles into the little box molded forward of the engine deck and drilling a hole in the rear plate for the starting crank handle.

The Turret

The beanie provided is the turret from the M4A4 kit and has a number of problems stemming from that heritage that I fixed before using it. I reshaped the

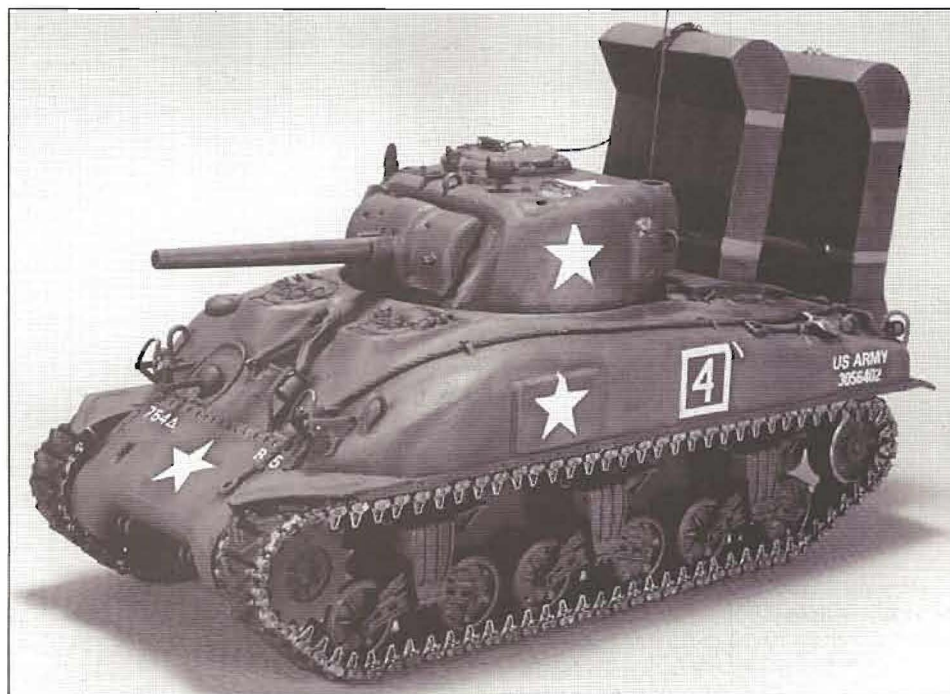
area forward of the commander's cupola on the out-board edge since the contour there is a bit thick. I gave it a Dremel tuck right in front of the splash guard. DML includes both the M34 and the M34A1 gun mantlets even though there is no mention of this in the

instructions; again you get to pick and have an extra left over for the spares box. I took the side armor for the mantlet opening off the M34 mantlet before installing the gun tube and for Major Jim I used the coax machine gun armor (Part B29). The kit does not provide an AA .50cal machine gun and since many M4A1 with this hull type didn't have them (at least when they were photographed in combat) this is not really a problem.

Final details included addition of a wire grab handle on the commander's hatch, and a pair of radio antennae. Major Jim was a command tank (one of two) and had two radio masts, one in the usual antenna position on the back of the turret, and another mounted on the front lip of the driver's hood. This latter antenna mast interfered slightly with the hatch but the spring on it let them get the lid open (everybody asks about this). The antenna rods are multipiece at this time and have pronounced bulges where the sections screw together. I wrapped decal strips around the wire for the antenna to achieve the bulges.

Coloration

I painted the tank flat olive drab (dark) and then drybrushed the hull and turret to bring out some of the detail. I added the few markings, a bar and square unit identifier on both sides of the hull and the name, all from the kit sheet. I figured the real tank had a War Department serial number under the mud camouflage so that came from a Masters decal sheet using the dark blue numbers. Once the markings were dry, a coat of the new Testors Clear Flat went on beautifully and sealed the decals nicely. After that I made the mud color by mixing alcohol with tube type water color paint, mixing several colors to get the yellow mud shade I wanted. I then brushed this on the tank using the only known photo as a guide to the left side.





Right: a peek at the front hatch hoods which show off those cool OTM periscope guards. Left: a more heads-down shot of the front end. Both these shots show the excellent casting detail on the hull. I added the tow cable from my scrap box—again. Come on guys, put a tow cable in the box already!



The scheme on the right is anybody's guess but should match the flavor of the left side. Same goes for the top.

The alcohol made the paint crack in a subtle manner and left me with a muddy looking tank. Everybody who saw it before and after the mud application hated the paint scheme. "Ugly Tank" was heard many times until I toned the garish mud job down with a mix of real dirt dusted onto the top surfaces and sides. Worked into the paint, the dust reduced the contrast between the mud pattern and the strong olive drab shade I used. Don't do one of these paint schemes unless you are prepared for some bold comments from the peanut gallery.

I ended up with a great model of the M4A1 the US Army took to its early fights in WWII. I could have stopped here, but I was having too much fun and was on a roll.

The Second Coming

With my second copy of the M4A1 I tried to build a late war Sherman with all the final "go to war" goodies on it. I also intended to put wading trunks on the engine end and wanted to paint it to match a tank from the 754th Tank Bn. in the Philippines, one of the units that received a Presidential Unit Citation for its contribution to the retaking of Manila in early 1945. Most of what is written about the early M4A1 above applies to this model except as noted below.

The re-manufactured hull

To do a later M4A1 hull and suspension here is a list of what I did with notes in case you want to try this. The kit instructions never mention these possibilities but most of what you need is in the box.

1) Use the one-piece cast nose from a later form of the Sherman. The kit has the three-piece, but for the late tank any nose that fits on an Italeri hull will do. I used one from their old M4A1 kit and I added only the "comb device."

2) Use the late pattern drive sprockets provided in the DML kit. Use the later solid spoke wheels or any suitable wheel that matches the tank you pick. I took the DML wheels and detailed the hollow backs with putty impressed with a copy of the detail on the front surface. To accomplish this, I made the master by squeezing epoxy putty coated with talcum powder into the kit wheel detail. This becomes the pattern used to impress the putty you fill the hollow side of each wheel with. Simple 3rd grade stuff really. If you want better wheels get a set from the new Italeri M4A3 Calliope kit. It has the best styrene set going (both sides detailed).

3) Use the late pattern raised return roller bogies given in the DML kit or alternatively use DML's early bogies but with the pillow block raised return roller mounts (parts B8-B9). Late war tanks had the rollers

raised normally in order to get the track off the skids and this kit has two ways to do it.

4) Prior to installing the wading gear I had to modify (remove mostly) the rear hull detail to attach the exhaust cover box. This is peculiar to wading tanks only, otherwise follow the info given above for the standard tank.

5) Use the correct idler for the tank you are doing. The solid spoke jobs in the kit are hollow on the back also, so follow my earlier procedure. The idler wheel type did not always match the road wheels but often did so check your references.

6) Change the air intake panel on the engine deck to one without the two extra fuel caps on either side of the intake screen. Not all re-manufactured tanks got new engine decks so this may not be necessary on all. The wading trunks cover this panel on my model.

7) Change the rearmost engine panel to one with the oil filler cap on the left side of it. The correct pattern should match the one on the old Italeri 76mm M4A1 hull, but if you keep the early intake panel then keep the early rear panel. Late panel in front, late panel in rear. Got it? I made the oil filler cap splash guard from a "bendable" piece of styrene scrap and got a filler cap from one of the duplicates already in the DML kit.

8) I used the kit front fenders, but most tanks had slightly different front parts with the hinge line running straight across the fender instead of at a diagonal. The diagonal hinge fenders in the kit were on the early tanks up to mid 1943 or thereabouts. I didn't change these but maybe you should.

9) Add the thin flat rail on the hull sides that supports the sand shields. It should have a lot of holes drilled in it so I used a Tamiya sand shield to get them in the right place. You can install Tamiya or Italeri shields if your tank has them.

10) The pioneer tool stowage is different on some later tanks. I had to relocate a few items normally on the hull plate to make room for the rear wading trunk box. Check your references.

11) Relocate the siren to left of center on the glacis and make a brush guard for it. The wire that powers it

runs back to the hole used in the original location or alternatively to a hole just to the left of the left headlight guard.

12) Add the gun travel lock if your tank had it, mine did. It comes in the kit as a spare.

13) Install a set of appliqué armor to the hull sides. The plate parts in the kit are intended for the M4A4 but will work if you bend the upper corner of the front right one. There are other patterns of appliqué possible so again, match this to your subject. Don't forget the right piece on the turret cheek if your tank has a revised turret. Front hull appliqué was not part of the factory upgrade so don't add the front panels in the kit unless you can prove it on your tank.

14) Use the appropriate tracks for your tank. I couldn't tell on my subject so I used the T48 rubber block tracks. DML has done a nice job with these and they have the chunky look of the originals. They also have some of the chevrons dinged up a bit with scratches and chunks missing. Neat, slightly worn track. I liked these in part because they help my model look like it just climbed over a coral reef.

Late turret

Changes here are limited in my case because the tank I chose had its original turret when it was re-manufactured. I did use the M34A1 mantlet parts given as extras in the kit but the rest are little detail bits. There are many choices of turrets found on late war tanks since some hulls got new turrets during re-manufacturing.

I used the kit turret with the shape changes done the same as on the other tank model. This time I also added the wire cage sight guard, the late type commander's sight from an OTM photo-etch sheet, a searchlight scrounged from a Tamiya M4A3 kit and reamed out for another MV lens to be inserted later, and another six tie downs from the KMC sheet already used. I used some more of the leftover KMC turret number sheet to add casting marks to the front of the gun mantlet and on two places on the turret. The trick to these little bits was told to me by the maker. Put them on with white glue and then dab



Above: the finished turret. Note the cables threaded into the TC's hatch and the dark areas around the mantlet. This is to represent where the rubber seals were peeled back. Below: swim trunks. Right: the right side tool detail.



them with the super stuff. It works better than sticking them to everything else but the tank.

Swim trunks

The deep wading "trunks" or swimming kit comprises two boxy stacks, one for the air intake portion of the engine deck, and a rear mounted stack that is used to vent engine compartment air and exhaust fumes. I chose the Tank Workshop set for the M4 and figured it would fit on the M4A1 since both versions share the same engine deck and rear hull layout (remember that assumption). TWS's wading gear is a common pattern used on late war U.S. Shermans, Priests, and others. A box fits over the front engine panel and another covers the entire back end of the tank from the service door up to the hull overhang. Identical boxes form the vertical stacks and TWS has done these with recesses at the top to simulate their hollow nature. I immediately found the stacks to be too tall so I shortened them about a quarter of an inch (7mm). I also had to trim the intake box to get it to fit the opening of the engine deck.

I used decal film (scrap) to make the waterproofing tape that seals the joints of the stack parts. Once painted this trick gives a noticeable ridge as would the real tape.

I rigged the wading trunk release ropes after I painted the tank. I didn't have good reference for how this is tied at the point where all four latch ropes come together with the main pull rope. I gave it a good knot of my own design and ran the pull rope to the commander's hatch. Anybody out there wanting to fill us in on this detail would be welcome to fill our mailbox. I also found it strange to have this tank in downtown

Manila with the trunks still installed but hey, it was the U.S. Army after all.

Paint shop

The model was shot in overall dark olive-drab (Tamiya) and then drybrushed with the new Testors faded olive-drab. This gives a nice look and my Sherman began to take on the appearance of a tank driven through salt water. The decals were scrounged from several sources, Masters' decals provided the front and rear unit numbers, the stars were Tamiya items cut to look like badly made crew applied ones to match the picture, and the yellow unit identifier square with number and platoon hash marks came from spare Superscale aircraft sheets hiding in my decal box. A coat of clear flat wiped out the small

amount of Tamiya Clear I previously brushed onto the areas where the decals ended up and once the whole thing was dulled down it looked great.

I painted the small details as needed and painted the tracks. These went on a section at a time as before but this time faster than on the first model. I did some black wash work on the deeper panel grooves, on the tracks, and on the lower slimy parts of the tank. Then I hit some of the corners with steel to pick out a few wear points but not too many because this was a fresh vehicle at the time it was photographed. Finally, I used dark green paint to add the dark patches left on the turret where the mantlet cover, smoke discharger cover, and turret race seal were installed. On the real tank several waterproof canvas seals are used to cover openings and joints that would otherwise leak water when the tank was wading. The cloth seals are attached to the tank with a dark colored tar like substance and this leaves marks after the seals are removed. Long discussion of a brief subject.

I finished up by using poster paint (dry) mixed with dirt to get a good South Pacific laterite soil color, something like the red stuff in Vietnam. This was liberally applied to the lower portions of the tank and to places the crew would walk. I rubbed it in before rinsing most of the excess off and got a pleasing reddish tinge to the lower olive drab surfaces. A bit of dry dirt mix on the tracks and bogies finishes the effect. As with all my tanks, I leave the final dirt job until they go on a base and the scheme is matched to the ground work. What you see here is still pretty clean looking.

Column A vs. column A

DML has given us a good M4A1 kit using the intermediate pattern hull. It will easily replace the old Nichimo A1 (same hull pattern) lurking in your closet because it is better in all respects. It has a ton of parts giving you an instant Sherman spare parts box. This means you can build early war and late war versions without difficulty. There are lots of M4A1 subjects in the published combat photos to provide you with a good choice to pick from. With all the after market parts you can buy it should now be possible to make almost any of them.

It is not an easy kit to build if you do the link-to-link tracks provided. Building the hull and turret are easy, so find a set of vinyl rubber bands if you want to do one quickly. Most of the Sherman builders out there will have a good time with DML's new M4A1 and it promises to be a favorite of the Sherman kit bashers. Got a conversion you need the hull and suspension for? Then use this kit because the bogie choices are the most flexible.

To sum it all up: this is one good pile of Chinese food. All it needs is some noodles and a pinch of soy sauce and a bag to carry the leftovers home in.

—Pete Harlem

MMIR RECCE

Dragon/DML M4A1 Sherman. Kit number 6048. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer (one—Pete buys anything above that). Suggested retail is \$39.98.

References

The usual characters. The two subject tanks can be found in the following.

Major Jim: *Armor Camouflage & Markings North Africa 1940-1943 Volume One*, by George R. Bradford, Progress Printing, 1971. Long since extinct. Has a great picture of the tank on page 70.

The M4 Sherman at War *The European Theater 1942-1945*, by Steven J. Zaloga, Concord Publishing 1994. Great color painting on page 33.

Wading Tank: *The Tank Battle of the Pacific War 1941-1945*, by Steven J. Zaloga, Concord Publishing 1995. Photo on page 49.

AIN

It was inevitable that in their quest for bigger and better kits, the resin companies would turn to armor transport vehicles. We've seen transporters of all types including the German heavy rail cars. Tank Workshop was the first with their Tiger rail car. This was followed by the Panther rail car. The next step was what TWS calls the Panzer IV transport car. This was the standard heavy transport car in the Reichbahn livery in the early part of the war. It was used to transport almost any type of vehicle up to the Panzer IV. It was occasionally used to move Panthers until their special heavy cars became available.

Langholzwagen (Schienentransportwagen). This is the above mentioned car dubbed the Panzer IV transport car by TWS. It's basically a big flat car, but TWS does provide stakes for the outside edge. These were sometimes used to protect the cargo or to roughly contain loose items.

Schwerer Feldbahnwagen. This is more or less the same car as the Langholzwagen. It differs in that it contains high wooden sides. It was used to transport all manner of non-weather sensitive gear, including troops, horses and crated gear. It has two large wooden doors on each side and TWS does provide a ramp. They also make a cargo load for this

Langholzwagen (Schienentransportwagen).



By happy coincidence, this car was commonly seen hooked to the larger railcars such as the Tiger type. An even happier coincidence is that this car is extremely similar to other types of cars used in these "panzer trains." TWS was (or is) clever enough to figure this out so they created four different types of rail car for our consumption. All are quite similar, but let me run them down for you first.

car as a separate item (TWS #1020).

Gedeckter Gerätewagen. Your basic box car. Again identical to the Langholzwagen, differing only in the addition of large wooden sides and a roof. This was used for anything that needed to stay dry. Use of a box car by the Germans conjures up visions of unfortunate civilians being shipped to their fates in the east. Due to its heavy rating this

car was probably not used for this grim purpose very often, if ever. It did serve as a covered troop transport or as an ambulance. Its substantial height was useful for stacked bunks. In panzer trains it was used as either a troop transport or for machine parts.

Leichter Feldbahnwagen. Another flat car, but this time rated for somewhat lighter loads. It contains short sides rather than just the stakes like the Langholzwagen. This would have moved half tracks or lighter armor. It's not uncommon to see these cars with quad flaks mounted in them and pushed ahead of the main engine.

I've been workin' on the railroad...

I hope you've got some extra room. Each of these models measures eleven inches when complete!

Construction is almost identical for each car and as such it moved along fairly quickly. They are each basically divided into two halves and the initial construction is composed of flat panels which make up the bed and the sides. About the only concern here is that all these panels are square and straight. Superglue was used throughout.

The suspension and "trucks" are next and these are simple as well. Aluminum rod is provided for the axles and the brake swing arms. The bottom frame and the axle housing are one piece assemblies, one per side of each car. More simple stuff.

The most complex part of the cars is either end (I write "either" because they're identical). This is where most of the parts are. Each of the ends contain two steps, two air hose couplers, two bumpers and a complicated hitch assembly. One thing to remember here is the that the bumper and the air hose couplers much be installed "boy-girl" on either end. There is a male and a female of each and if the cars are hooked to one another all the pieces fit together.

The most difficult part on any of the cars is the hitch assembly. Not counting the large hook, each

Schwerer Feldbahnwagen.



Aboard!

is composed of seven parts. And there's two on every car. If you plan to link the cars together, all of the hitch parts must be drilled and pinned if you want the mechanisms to remain workable. I went this route and it earned me some pretty sore fingers. Thick solder is provided for the air hoses and their ends must also be drilled out. Whew! Although tedious, the results are terrific.

All of the cars require grab handles of varying numbers. For example, there's two on either end of the Langholzwagen and fourteen on each end of the box car (whew, again). I used square plastic stock as a template and wrapped copper wire around it for the handles. I made two different sizes. I found that when placing the handles on the model, it was easier to drill just one hole for each handle. I cut one side of the handle to its correct depth and left the other long. The long end went into the hole and the cut side stopped it at the correct depth. These is much easier than trying to drill two perfectly aligned holes. The excess was then trimmed off the interiors with flush cutting nippers. I decided to close up the doors on the box car, so this step was skipped here.

There were no other construction difficulties that were unique to any of the models.

...All the live long day

You have a few choices when painting these babies. The instructions state that dark green or dark gray or even red oxide are appropriate. My model railroad buddies tell me that black and faded gray are also accurate. One source even cites ordinance tan as a valid color for the box car. I chose dark green for the flat cars with sides, dark gray for the flat car and a lighter gray for the box car.

I used Polly Scale throughout and I started by painting all of the models black. One thing I didn't immediately realize is that these things are big—really big. I used two full bottles of black to finally cover all the yellow covered resin.

I went back over each of the cars with their individual colors,

but left the undercarriages black. The beds then got some over sprays of tan and light gray to represent faded, beat-up wood.

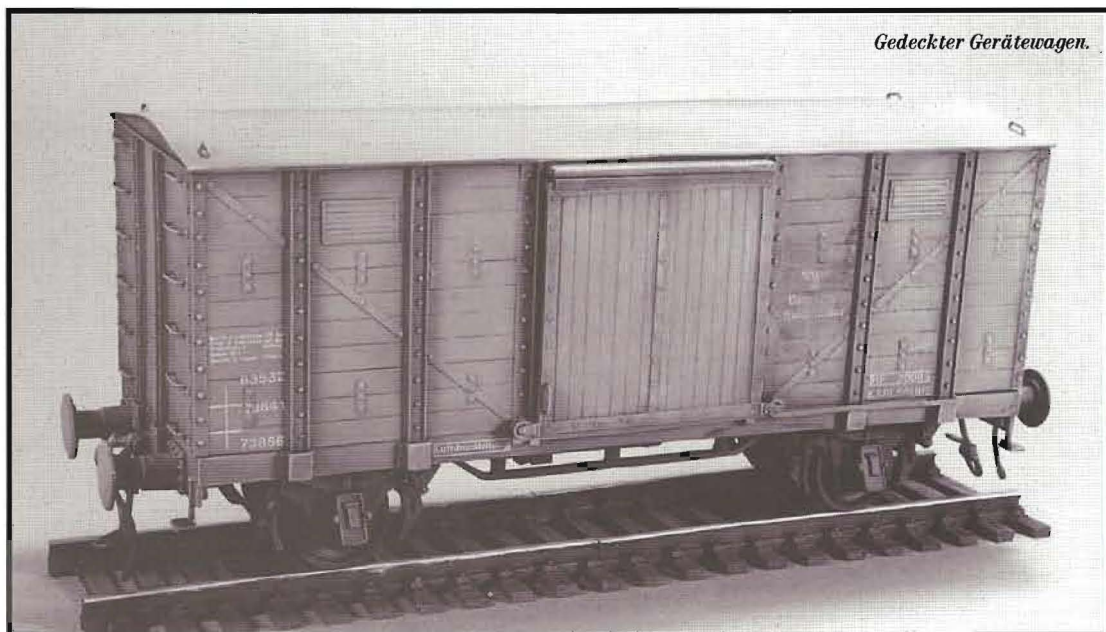
The decals provided are done for TWS by Masters Hobby Supply. You may have read about these in the pages of MMiR before. They are very thin and some of the most pleasurable waterslide decals you're likely to use. Each set is very compre-

hensive and the markings give all the cars a pleasing look of authenticity.

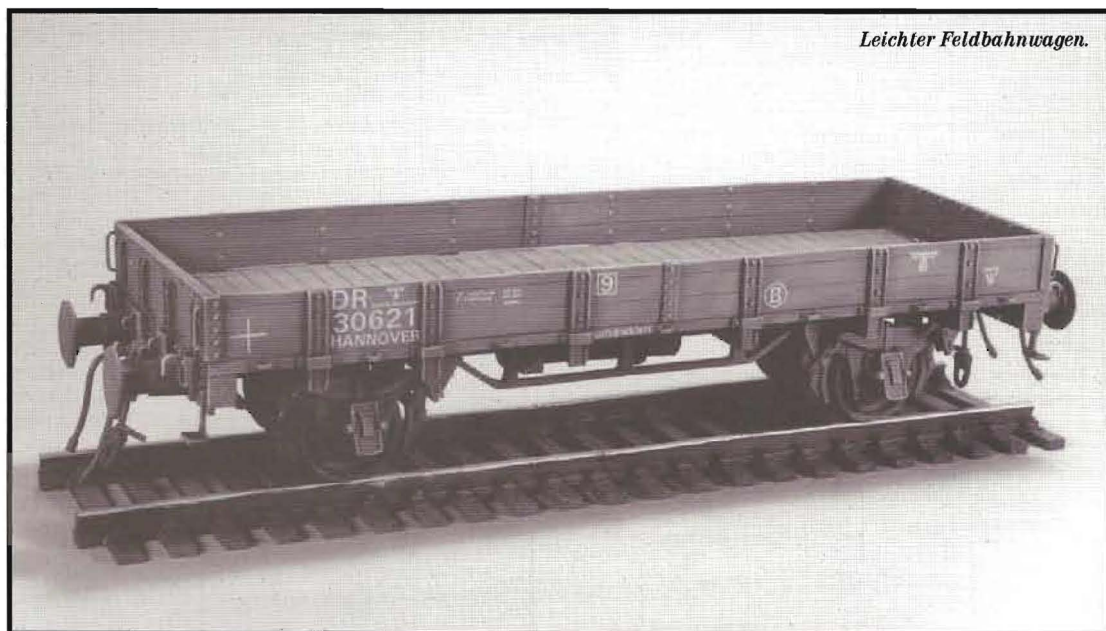
These decals are really thin, so be careful when moving them around on the model. Especially on the more complex surfaces. Once the setting solution (they recommend Micro Sol) starts to work they are easy to damage.

I glossed the areas receiving the markings then let that dry over night. Once the decals were dry

Gedeckter Gerätewagen.

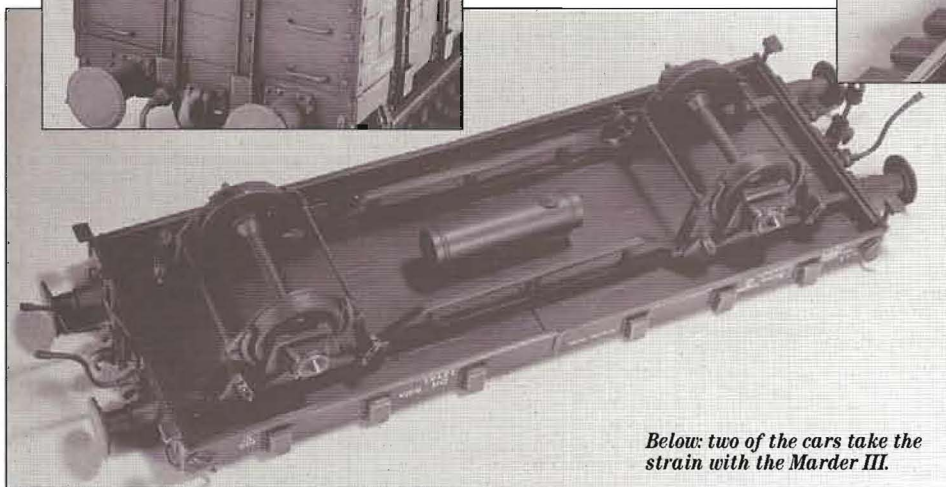
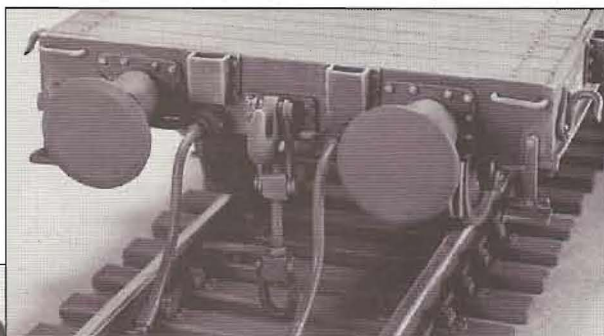


Leichter Feldbahnwagen.

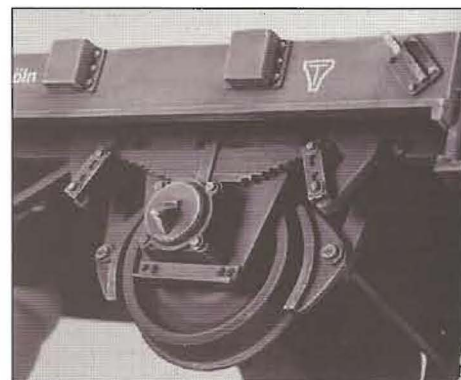




Left: the box car gets fourteen handles—on each end. Yikes! Right: the end of the flat car. All the cars are identical to this. Below right: detail of the truck on the flat car. Note the great looking decals. Below: the bottom of the flat car. There are only minor differences between the cars in this area.



Below: two of the cars take the strain with the Marder III.



I flat coated overall and the film simply disappears. Excellent.

I didn't want to over weather the models, so I turned to a unique product in the Polly Scale coral; Dust. This was first offered in their railroad color line so I thought it very apropos. It's essentially flat coat with a little pale pigment added. If ghosted on as several thin layers, it represents fading and dust quite well. Because I'm a bit impatient, I add a drop of Neutral Gray to the mix before spraying. This worked well to dull down the bright white markings and add a beat-up look to the wooden parts of the cars.

The models then got a wash of heavily diluted black and burnt umber oil paint. When this was dry, I dry brushed everybody with light gray and steel in the heavy wear areas.

Just to pass the time away...

I was very impressed with these models. There were no significant building problems and I enjoyed the way TWS approached the subject. I never thought flat panels of resin would build up into something so sturdy. The box car especially ended up being down right hefty.

What to do with the buggers? Good question. I'll be displaying mine individually for now, but I'll eventually show one or two of them as part of a small diorama. There is another MMiR builder who's working on the K52 engine as I write this.

Let's see, the four cars put together are forty-four inches, add an inch for each coupler, that's forty-seven inches. Add the engine, that's another twenty-seven inches. Add a tank railcar or two (sixteen

inches each), and we're up to around nine feet. Ooooboy! I think I have to start looking for a bigger house... Tickets please! ☹

—Pat Stansell

MMiR RECCE

The Tank Workshop Langholzwagen (Schienentransportwagen) PzKpfw. IV Transport Car.

Kit number 2012. Suggested retail \$80.00.

Schwerer Feldbahnwagen (Heavy Cargo Railway Car). Kit number 2013. Suggested retail \$80.00.

Gedeckter Gerätewagen (Railway Box Car). Kit number 2014. Suggested retail \$85.00.

Leichter Feldbahnwagen (Light Cargo Railway Car). Kit number 2015. Suggested retail \$80.00. Kits graciously provided by the manufacturer.

References

An excellent idea. Do you know of any? O.K. I'm just being a wise-ass. There is nothing specific that I know of on WWII rolling stock. There probably is something, but it's most likely known only by the model railroad crowd. If anyone knows a title and a source, please drop us a line.

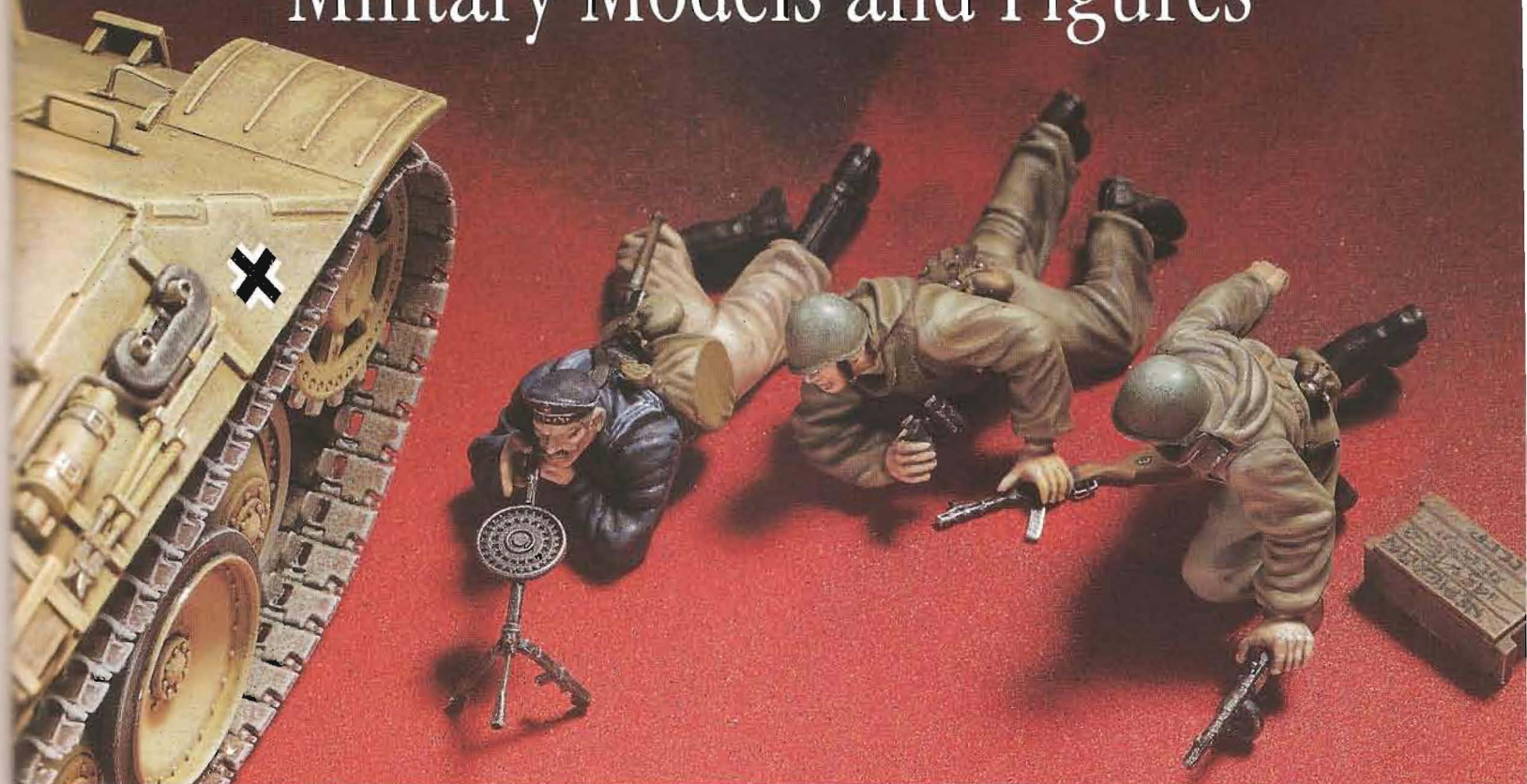
I relied on photos in the various German armor books. This is the kind of thing you've looked at a thousand times, but never noticed. Look for any shots of railcars transporting tanks. These four cars are almost always seen in the photos as well.

The following may also help:

Weapons of the Third Reich, an Encyclopedic survey of all small arms, artillery and special weapons of the German land forces 1939-1945, by Terry Gander and Peter Chamberlain, Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1979. This out of print book does contain an interesting section on railroad flak guns, some which were based on the four subject cars.

German Armored Trains in World War II, Volume One by Wolfgang Sawodny, Schiffer Publishing. *German Armored Trains in World War II, Volume Two* by Wolfgang Sawodny, Schiffer Publishing.

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Marder Mania

The Commanders Series German Self-Propelled Anti-Tank gun



From the early stages of operation Barbarossa the appearance of superior Russian armor forced the German army to pursue self-propelled anti-tank guns as a short-term solution to the ever growing imbalance in Russian armor quality and quantity. Though considered a stop gap measure, many of these self-propelled guns remained in service until the end of the war. The Sdkfz 139 Marder III was one of the first in a long line of conversions using obsolete or captured tank chassis. A total of 344 Sdkfz 139 Marder III were produced.

The Marder III utilized the chassis of the obsolete Czech built 38(t), and a captured Russian 76.2 cm anti-tank gun. The 76.2cm gun was re-manufactured and re-chambered enabling it to fire 75mm Pak 40 rounds. In July 1942 the Marder II's were upgraded to ausf.(H) standard which gave them a larger 150 hp engine starting with chassis #1601. The main short comings with the Marder III design were the high silhouette and the thinly armored and open topped fighting compartment. Despite these deficiencies the Marder III was well received by its crews and was a formidable weapon. Most of the Marder III's served on the Russian front with a few finding their way to north Africa. It is amazing to me that so much war materiel was captured that virtually whole weapons programs could be supported.

Marderama

This latest kit from Commanders models is a conversion for the old Italeri Panzer 38(t) or the Marder III kit which shares the same lower hull and suspension components. The kit comes in a small box but don't be fooled, they pack a lot of resin in there including a partial interior. All the parts have been nicely rendered in resin with no photo-etched. The detail is very crisp and in my example the castings were very good.

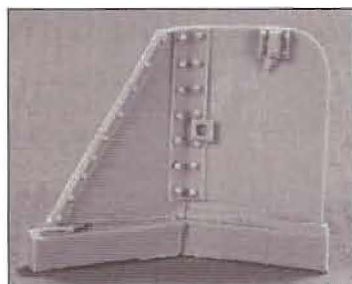
For those of you not familiar with Commanders you might want to give them a try. There probably one of the better kept secrets in terms of price and quality and offer a wide range of really interesting subjects.

The first step I usually take in building a resin kit is to clean up all the parts. Commanders has

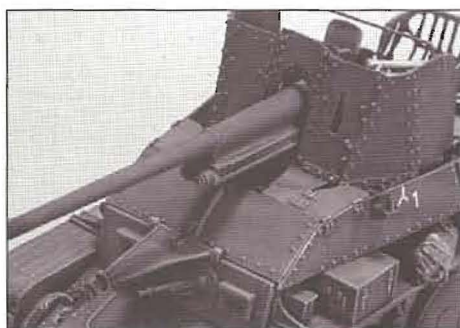
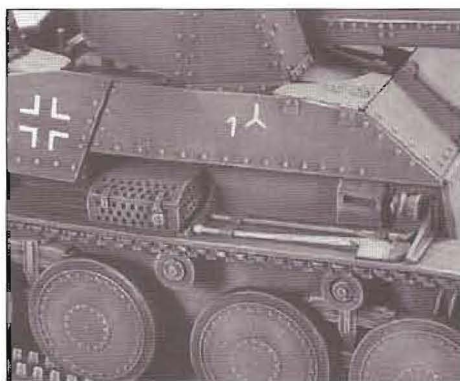
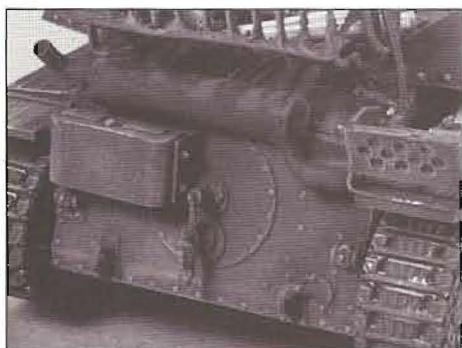
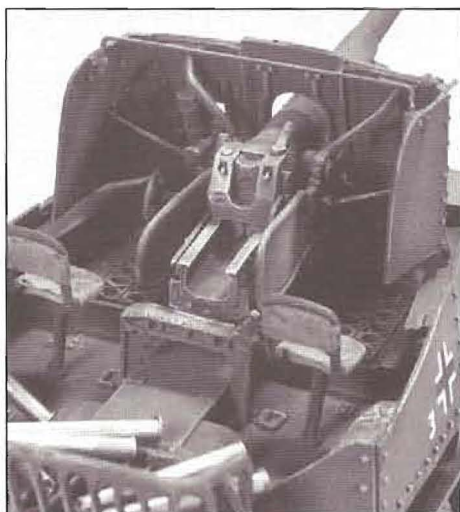
made this very easy in the way the parts are attached to their plugs. Some of the smaller parts are attached to a sprue reminiscent of the injection molding process. Armed with a fresh X-acto all you have to do is score a line where the part meets the plug and snap it off. A little touch with the file and you're on your way. The only parts that required any serious work were the cruciform gun mount and the transmission. One might want to use a little Dremel action here in order to speed things up.

I was a little worried about removing the thin armored side plates and the gun shields, but this proved to be no trouble. My compliments to the chef.

The suspension was assembled per the instructions so that it can articulate. I wish more manufacturers would include this feature. We can get the smallest tool clasp in photo-etch but not a suspension that works. Go figure. The correct wheels are not supplied in the conversion, so a spare set of DML road wheels that was pillaged from my spares box got me back on the right track—no pun intended. With the suspension and running completed, the resin fire wall and rear deck were added and they fit like a glove. The transmission required a little tweaking in order to make it



The resin casting in the kit was very nice. The parts were easy to remove and some challenging parts are rendered well.



clear the kit's sprocket mountings. There's plenty of potential here to do a full blown interior, but the completed model does not offer a clear view.

I deviated from the kit's instructions regarding the ammo storage racks. I mounted a double rack on either side of center in the fighting compartment. This made more sense in that it would allow the crew access to the interior engine hatch. If you follow the instructions it gets pretty crowded in there. I had to prune the interior walls a bit with a Dremel in order to get things just right. A little sanding was required on the fore/aft sides of the drive shaft cover to ensure a proper fit.

The kit's fenders and mounts were attached before tackling the side shields. Being that this is an open topped fighting vehicle you need to plan out the assembly sequence in order to accommodate the painting process. Using part #3, the front glacis plate and part #4, the front shield as your staring point, carefully dry fit the side shields with blue-tack. Once you are satisfied with the fit, super glue the shields to the lower hull, but not parts 3 and 4, put them aside until the interior is painted and weathered. If you do it like this you won't end up with a gap like I did. A small amount of filling was

required where the side shields met the kit hull. The rest of the lower hull details were not mentioned in the Commander's instructions, but their placement is pretty obvious.

Refer to your references regarding stowage and miscellaneous detail locations because things seem to vary a bit. The conversion contains some neat things as does the kit. So between that and the old spares box, the modeler is left with some options. The large rear basket, which is an impressive piece of resin, lacks the brackets needed to mount it.

These were added using thin brass and some Grandt line bolts for good measure. Although this part is impressively rendered in resin, it remains a bit thick. Ambitious modelers with soldering skills could take a crack at a brass wire replacement. The book Tony Greenland's Master Modelling Class contains great shots of a Marder III under construction for those needing additional inspiration.


The small basket part #16 that sits on the rear fender also lacked mounting details, which I remedied in the same manner as above. Remember to rock it at a backward angle. The seats do not have any locations marked on the engine deck, so you have to use your best ergonomic judgment. In other words, if you were the dudes how would you sit? I added a few tools from a DML kit as well as the jack supplied in the conversion.

The 7.62cm main gun is a neat little model in its own right and goes together very nicely. This is not a knock off the Italeri 7.62. The only thing that gave me a bit of trouble was the two piece muzzle brake. Once the halves are joined it is a real chore to get rid of the seam and will require some putty. A hole needs to be drilled to mount the muzzle brake concentricity to the gun barrel I thought the end result looked pretty convincing. This may have been a good application for white metal, but perhaps weight was a consideration. The cross bar for the winter cover was made out of brass rod. There are some good pictures of a Marder III in *Panzer Colors* (the orange one) all decked out in the full winter cover if this interests you.

The kit tracks are pretty good and with a little love they should be just fine. We're talkin' old Italeri here. Not to be too negative, but in my humble opinion Italeri's old stuff is a step above their new. The 38(t) is a 20-year old kit and can still hold its own with today's high-tech/high-price kits. I for one would like to see them go back to the basics.

Marder Colors

I finished the vehicle in a Panzer Gray scheme using Tamiya acrylics. I washed and weathered the model using the same techniques as described in my *Panzer III J* article (MMiR V2, 2). The Balkan Kruze's are Verlinden and the other markings were hand painted using artist's oils. Some stowage was added for effect and pastels were used for a final touch.

This is an interesting vehicle and should make a welcomed addition to any collection. In my opinion it represents a good value for the money and as a bonus it is a conversion that really works. The only thing I would have liked to see would have been the inclusion of some photo-etched. For someone wanting to do this kit to the T, you could mix and match commercially available photo-etched sets. This would also be a good kit for someone not experienced in conversions or working with resin. I enjoyed doing this project and I highly recommend it. 

—Nick Vanston

MMiR RECCE

Commander Series Models SdKfz Marder III. Kit number 2-070. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail \$45.00.

References

Panzer Colors, by Bruce Culver, Squadron Signal Publications, 1976. Excellent shot of the vehicle being moved onto rail cars with its full foul weather cover in place.

The Eastern Front by Steven J. Zaloga & James Grandsen, Squadron Signal Publications, 1983. A good color plate of the Marder and the inspiration for my model. Still in print.

Tanks of World War Two by Jean Restayn, Histoires & Collections, 1995. Two more excellent color plates of the vehicle.



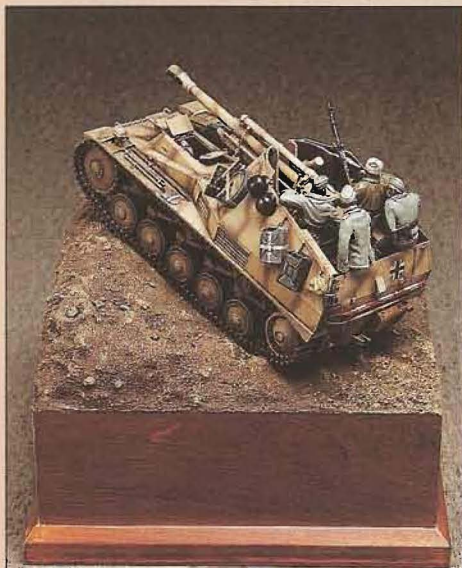
(Wespe in Action)

In many ways, I feel the Tamiya Wespe is the most exciting new release in the series since the retooled Tiger I. But despite the level of detail, the kit goes together perfectly, generating no stress in the modeler at all (whew!). Producing a 10.5cm gun this detailed that assembles this easily is testimony to the Tamiya magic. And these figures! Taking advantage of the open-top nature of the Wespe, we get two very-chilly-looking German soldiers who quickly call up images of the Eastern Front. This kit has something to please just about any modeler. In which direction will you take it?

I decided on a simple scene for my Wespe. As the Wespe is such a small vehicle, putting in a diorama together with larger vehicles really moves it off center stage, so I decided to position it alone, and to cut the diorama base down as small as possible. To make up for the smaller size, I tried to give the work impact with exciting figures and plentiful accessories. The most important thing in any diorama is being able to identify the scene in a moment.

Like always, a story should be the focus of any diorama, but also important is its "density" or "intensity." An "dense" diorama, even if small, will keep a viewer interested in it for a long time.





This doesn't mean that you should simply pack stuff into it, filling all the blank spaces. Rather, well-placed and well-built accessories and decorations can be used to enliven otherwise routine scenes or vehicles. How one goes about this is entirely up to the individual modeler, but using one's imagination in this area is one of the great joys of the hobby.

The base in this diorama is quite simple—just dirt and grass—but I tried to intensify the work by piling numerous accessories onto the vehicle and packing the crew compartment with figures. In this vignette, the figures don't tell their own story, but are there to enhance the feeling of the Wespe climbing the slope. Creating a sense of motion with a single vehicle is nearly impossible, but with properly posed figures, it can be done quite easily. Of course, the figures have to look very natural, and that can take some time, but I think it was worth it.

In this work, I made no attempt to portray a particular Wespe from a particular unit, but rather just used broad setting: Eastern Front, Fall 1943. In order to help generate the atmosphere of the Eastern Front, I gave one of the figures a fur-lined cap. While many modelers (myself included) enjoy doing extensive research to verify the historical accuracy of various settings, I think just working to make something "feel" right, as I've done here, can be a lot of fun, too, even if something may be slightly incorrect. Of course, you have to make sure that nothing is so historically out of whack as to give the viewer an uneasy feeling. Achieving the proper balance in this area is also one of diorama building's great challenges and pleasures.

Figure Central

All of the figures are either scratch built (loosely using the phrase, since I do use heads, hands and feet from the parts box) or conversions of existing pieces. Here is a brief run down of what I did.

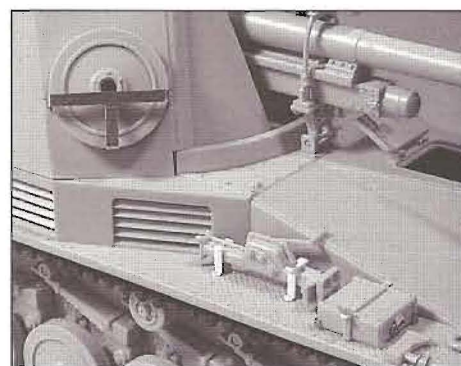
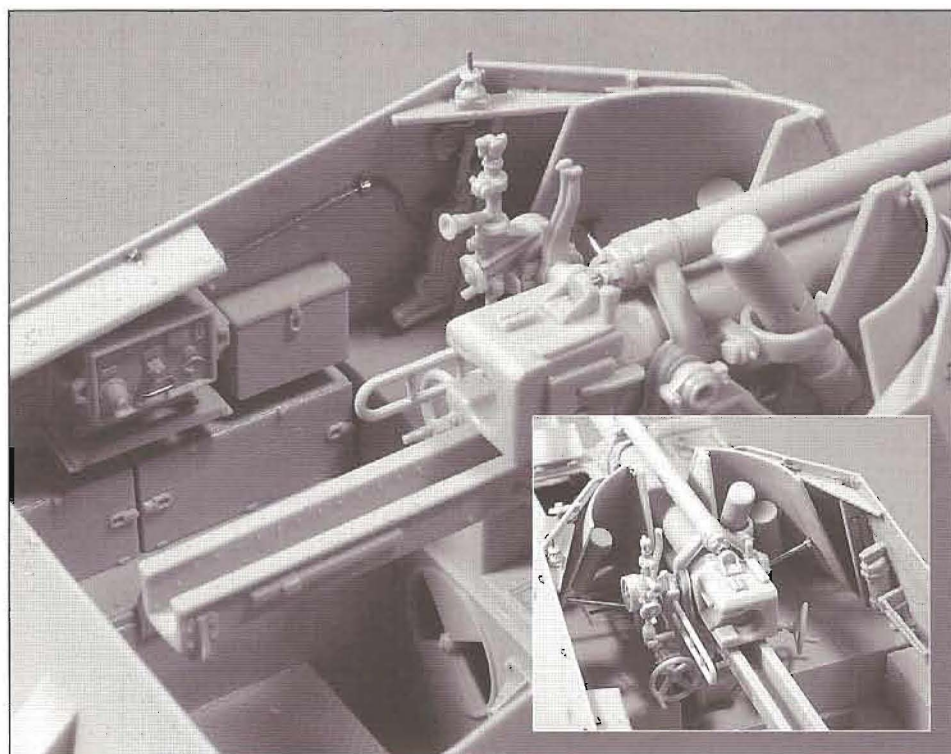
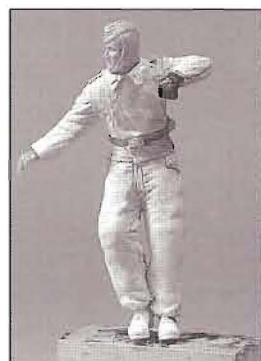
The seated figure is scratch built, but uses the head from the Dragon/DML skiing soldier set. He's depicted as a major in standard fatigues.

All of my scratch built figures are built by connecting the heads, hands and feet from various kits to a resin block torso with brass wire. Epoxy putty for wood is used to build-up the basic shapes, and then epoxy putty for plastic (such as Duro or A+B) is used for clothing and other details. After a coat of primer, I paint them with Humbrol enamels.

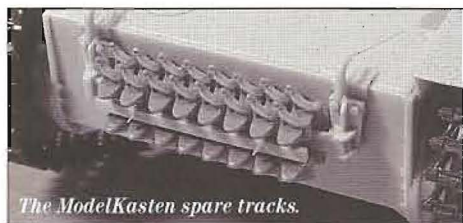
The straight-standing figure with his arm extended is another scratch build. The head



Two of the figures in the diorama are simple conversions, while the other three are scratch built. Here is a step-by-step illustration of each figure. They are shown in order with the progression running from top to bottom. 1) the driver is a Cromwell head on a Verlinden torso. 2) the bent over figure is one of two provided in the Wespe kit. I modified him by bending his torso forward. All of my scratch built figures are built by connecting the heads, hands and feet from various kits to a resin block torso with brass wire. 3) the overcoated figure has a Hornet head with the fur cap from the Dragon/DML skiing soldier set. The flashlight near his shoulder is from my scrap box. 4) the straight-standing figure with his arm extended is another scratch build. The head comes from the figure in the Wespe kit wearing the overcoat. 5) the seated figure uses the head from the Dragon/DML skiing soldier set.



These shots show my very few added details. I didn't feel like putting much on the kit I was so pleased with it. There are a few more things that can be done to the kit. I refer anyone interested to the Sept. '96 Military Modelling article by Brian Wells.



The ModelKasten spare tracks.

comes from the figure in the Wespe kit wearing the overcoat. The field gray assault gun crew uniform is depicted with the (red) collar markings of the artillery.

The overcoated figure has a Hornet head with the fur cap from the Dragon/DML skiing soldier set. The rubber coat is that of a motorcycle soldier. The flashlight near his shoulder is from my scrap box.

The bent over figure is essentially the other figure provided in the Wespe kit. I modified him by bending his torso forward to depict him braced against the climb up the slope. He still looks cold though!

The driver is simply a Cromwell head on a Verlinden torso. I only bothered to paint the head properly, as the rest is barely visible inside the vehicle.

Wespe, a little extra

Tamiya's Wespe is a fine kit and only a few details were added to enhance it. There is one accuracy bugaboo in the crew compartment. I believe the forward ammo boxes and heater vent are incorrectly configured. It's something that I didn't bother to tackle, because the inside of the vehicle was going to be full of figures. There's a fascinating article in the September, 1996 Military Modelling by Brian Wells which covers many of these blips and Mr. Wells' excellent solutions for them.

Some of my added details include the spare links on the front of the vehicle. These are from ModelKasten, though the ones included in the kit are of very high quality. I suppose I could have used the complete set for the vehicle. Note that there are two rows of spare tracks.

The Bosch light came from the Tamiya Panzer Mk. IV accessories set, very slightly modified. I felt it was better proportioned than the one supplied in the kit. It was hard to figure out where the power cord entered the vehicle, but I located it on the side using wire for the cord and styrene for the fitting.

The spare road wheel rack was scratch built from brass sheet. Many photos showed vehicles with spare wheels attached in this location. The jack and its mount bracket were detailed with a little plastic stock and ModelKasten butterfly nuts. The tools also received photo-etched clasps.

Small copper wire loops were installed around the edge of the superstructure. I later hung the various personal gear, Jerry cans and helmets here. To complete the exterior clutter, I added ammo crates, a cloth bag, a wooden crate, and of course, a bucket.

The only modification I made to the 10.5cm gun was building the armor plate stays with brass wire. I changed the mount just slightly to allow attachment after painting. This is accomplished by trimming the mounting pin slightly, then leaving the gun out of the trunion. Once painted, the trunion is installed, the

pin slipped in and the gun mounted in the trunion.

I added a copper wire radio cord and a brass wire handle to the radio in the crew compartment.

My Wespe was painted with Tamiya acrylics using dark yellow with a brown over spray. Careful attention must be paid to the underside, which is now clearly visible!

Base-sically

The base is a simple affair constructed of cheap wood that was then covered with thin strips of veneer. A wooden molding was applied around the base. I deliberately made the base high to enhance the view into the crew compartment.

The ground work was built up using Styrofoam and the kit was placed against it several times to achieve the right effect.

A polyfilla/Celluclay material was used to create the earth and fine soil particles were sprinkled in. White glue was used as a bonding agent.

I figured that the reverse slope of a hill such as the one shown in the scene would be fairly eroded. So I only added a small amount of static grass here and there.

I hope that my efforts will provide inspiration to those of you out there who desire to display their finished models in a unique way. There are many smaller vehicles that could benefit from this compact display.

—Masahiro Dio

MMiR RECCE

Tamiya German Self-Propelled Howitzer Wespe. Kit number 35200. Suggest retail \$39.00.

ModelKasten Panzer Mk. II & Wespe Track Set. Kit Number SK-25. Suggested retail \$39.95.

References

See MmiR number eight.



Scratch-built 120mm AAVP7A1 and 1/35th scale kit part

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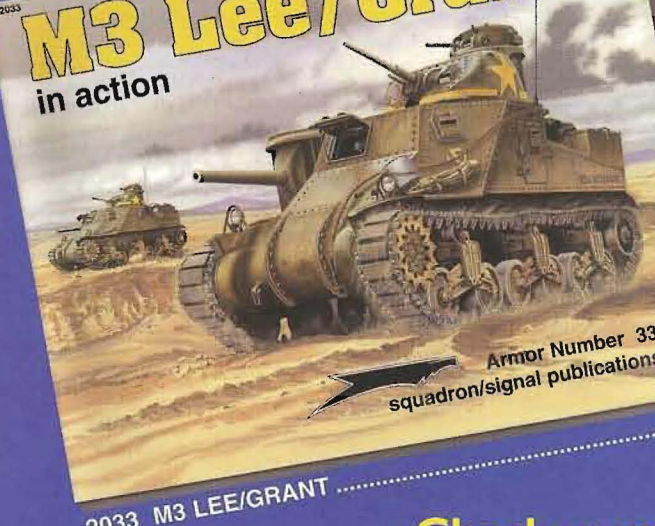
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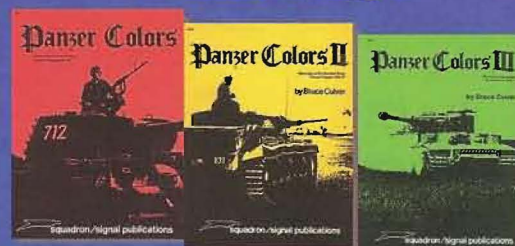
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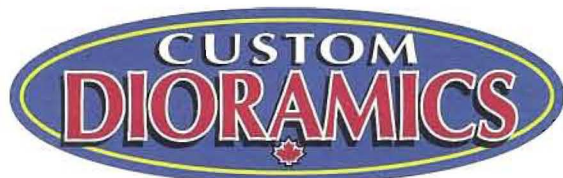
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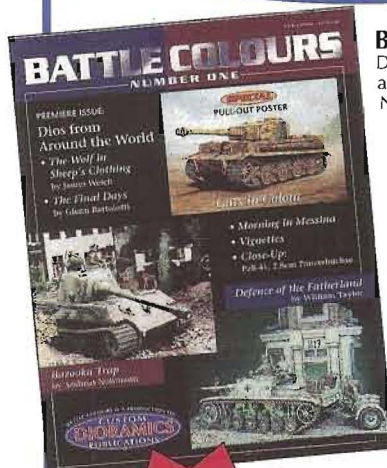
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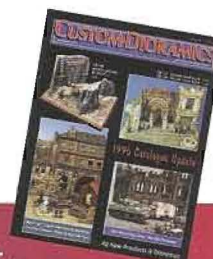
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The Double Deutsch Bus

Azimut's answer to the Ostfront's mass transit problems



As was customary with most armies during World War II, the German Wehrmacht made use of large numbers of buses to supplement their regular motor transportation. Opel alone built over 8,300 buses which were used as troop transports, ambulances, field workshops, mobile surgical hospitals and a large variety of field offices and communications centers.

The French firm of ADV/Ironside has recently provided a multi-media kit of the Opel Blitz bus which should go very nicely with many of the other recent Opel Blitz conversions. The Ironsides kit consists of injection plastic, resin, white metal and photo-etched brass which will build up into a very nice kit. It will take some effort as well as good modeling experience to create that nice kit. This surprised me, considering I have found most of ADV's products to be excellent.

It was my impression that the kit would include original Italeri Opel Blitz parts supplemented with new parts needed to build up the kit. This would have been similar to other Ironside offerings such as the R40 which included a complete Heller R35 kit. For whatever reason Ironside injection molded their own Opel Blitz parts which I did not find up to par with the equivalent Italeri parts, but more on that later.

What you do get with the kit are white plastic body panels, floor, roof chassis and cab section, resin castings of the engine, wheels, undercarriage and furniture, and some pieces of the suspension in white metal. You also get a nice etched brass fret

which includes door handles, wipers, seats, etc. Lengths of brass rod, a heavier gauge iron rod and clear plastic for the windows also are provided.

Get on the bus...

Construction begins by attaching the front chassis frame to the floor, which also has the remaining chassis frame molded onto it. The engine and radiator (which are appear to be resin copies of the Italeri stock parts) are supposed to go on next. I found out later that the engine/cab section will simply not go with the radiator attached so I had to remove it. Beware.

Next came the suspension system, which is a mix of resin and white metal parts. The resin tires come with the B-hole tread pattern which is quite nice and more realistic than what is usually offered. I am not certain why the suspension was made from two different mediums but I believe that it undoubtedly contributed to the difficult time I had putting it together. Be forewarned that the resin used is brittle and prone to snapping rather easily. I had the assembly fall apart in whole or in part more than once including having one of the dual rear assemblies snap right off at the hub. Arrrgh!

The front suspension is a little easier to put together, but on the down side, the instructions are very unclear on a torsion type bar which runs behind the axle. On the Italeri kit an actual part is provided, while here the diagram simply points to some attachments and a length of black heavy gauge wire running from somewhere. Having built

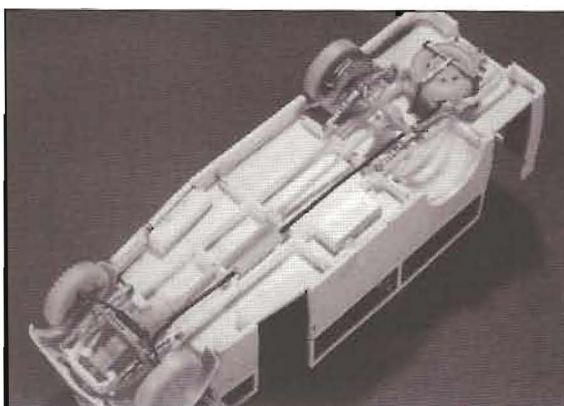
several Italeri kits, I knew what was needed and I built an acceptable assembly.

You now have the drive shafts to attach and the forward of the two will require that a good sized notch be cut in the cross-beam of the chassis in order for it to fit and be attached to the engine crankcase. The exhaust system was installed next with a resin muffler and a length of the heavy-gauge black wire. Again instructions are unclear as to where they actually should be attached. It should run down the left side of the bus and probably will require some bending and notching the bus frame for it to fit. I felt the wire was too thin to represent the exhaust pipe so I slipped a piece of plastic tube over it.

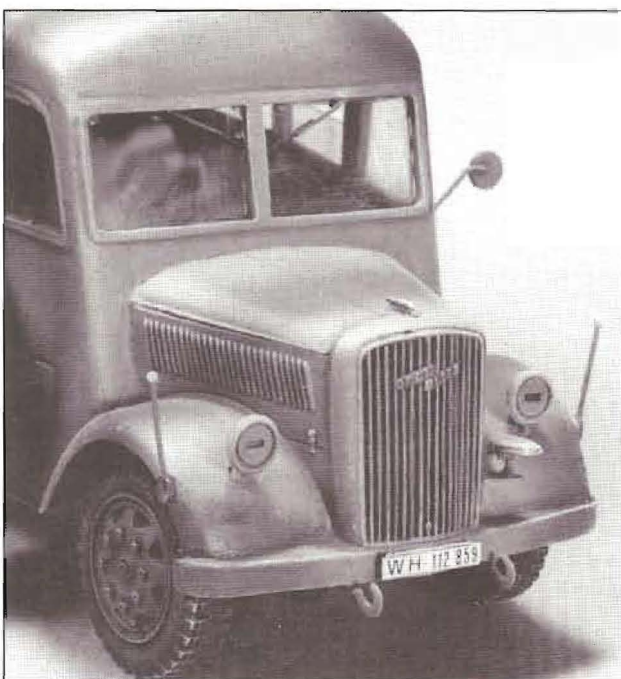
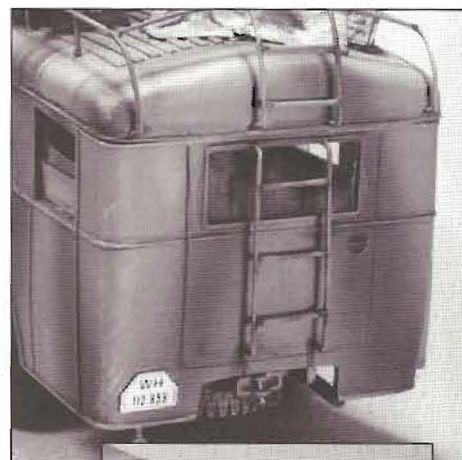
The spare tire goes directly underneath the rear chassis behind the rear axle assembly. However no method of attachment is provided so I constructed a frame from brass strip.

Plastic problems

I then proceeded to build the body of the bus and again found myself a bit disappointed. I ran into more of the white plastic copies of the Italeri parts. Unfortunately I found the copies to be of inferior quality and detail than the originals. The plastic used is a somewhat soft white material very similar to that used in the old Historex figures. The detail is unclear and damaged easily. Many of the parts, especially the roof, had large gouges apparently from where they were separated from the sprue. This gives the appearance of being torn off



Left: the bones of the bus. The use of the white plastic does require a small amount of filler as evidenced by the photo on the far left. The second shot shows the undercarriage. The back wheel broke off during the photo session...



Clockwise from above left: an overall view of the bus. The interior is quite visible through the many windows of the bus. You can't usually say that about the interior of a tank. Next is the back end and a detail of the top rack. This was flat photo-etched in the kit. The final shot at left shows the front end. I liked the Italeri parts better...

straight forward. Three doors are provided, you can leave them open or closed as you wish. Besides the brass door and grab handles which come with the kit, I detailed the doors with some window cranks.

The kit provides very decent furniture and appliances for the inside, mostly in resin, including tables, swivel chairs, a bed, a bench and a large cabinet. Also provided are an Enigma coding machine, a radio, typewriter, a field phone and a receiver. Despite all this, the interior of the bus looks empty due to its cavernous size, so I decided to add a couple of wall cabinets from

sheet plastic to the partition walls. I also added wires to the electrical apparatus, drawers to the bench and some clutter to fill in the large areas, including a scratch built fire extinguisher.

Attaching the roof to the body caused a bit of a dilemma. The front rounded part of the roof actually is supposed to be flared into the front of the window screen frame. This requires that the roof

be attached, puttied and sanded and then painted. However, doing this would seal the inside of the bus and make it very difficult to install the windows later as they would have to be placed from the inside. I decided to cut off the front section of the roof, glue it in place, and then fill, sand and paint it separately from the rest. Once the windows are in place you can go ahead and attach the rest of the roof, or as I chose to do, leave it unattached so it can be lifted to show the detailing on the inside. I had to ignore the brass etched ladder and luggage frame provided with the kit as it is obviously flat and the actual frame and ladder were made from pipe. I replaced the photo-etched with brass rod.

The kit was finished with some other detailing, including jerry can holder and a rear view mirror.

Yellow, of course

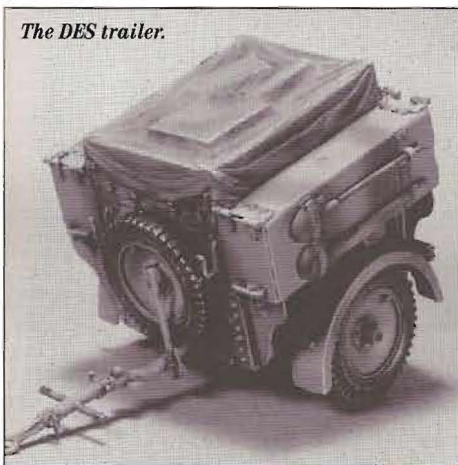
The vehicle was airbrushed with Tamiya dark yellow, with a field gray over spray pattern. It was finished with oil washes and dry brushing. I used a mixture of Floquil and Testors enamels.

The windows now were added using the clear plastic provided with the kit. White glue was used to attach them to the frames and small sections of plastic rod were used to represent pull handles.

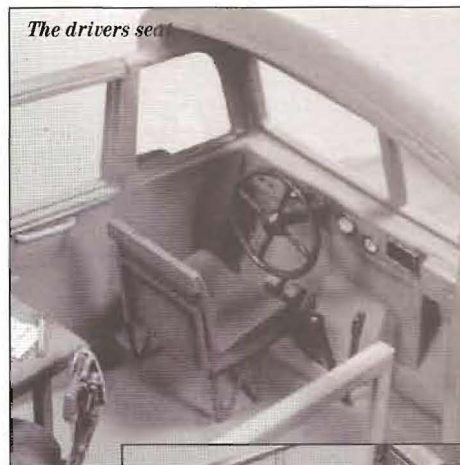
the tree and requires that they be fixed before assembly. Another example is the radiator/bumper assembly. The identical Italeri part is crisp, with individual slats for the radiator and a clear "Blitz" name plate. The Ironside part almost has the feeling of being cast, with no separation between slats and no well defined name plate.

Assembly of the body and the interior is fairly

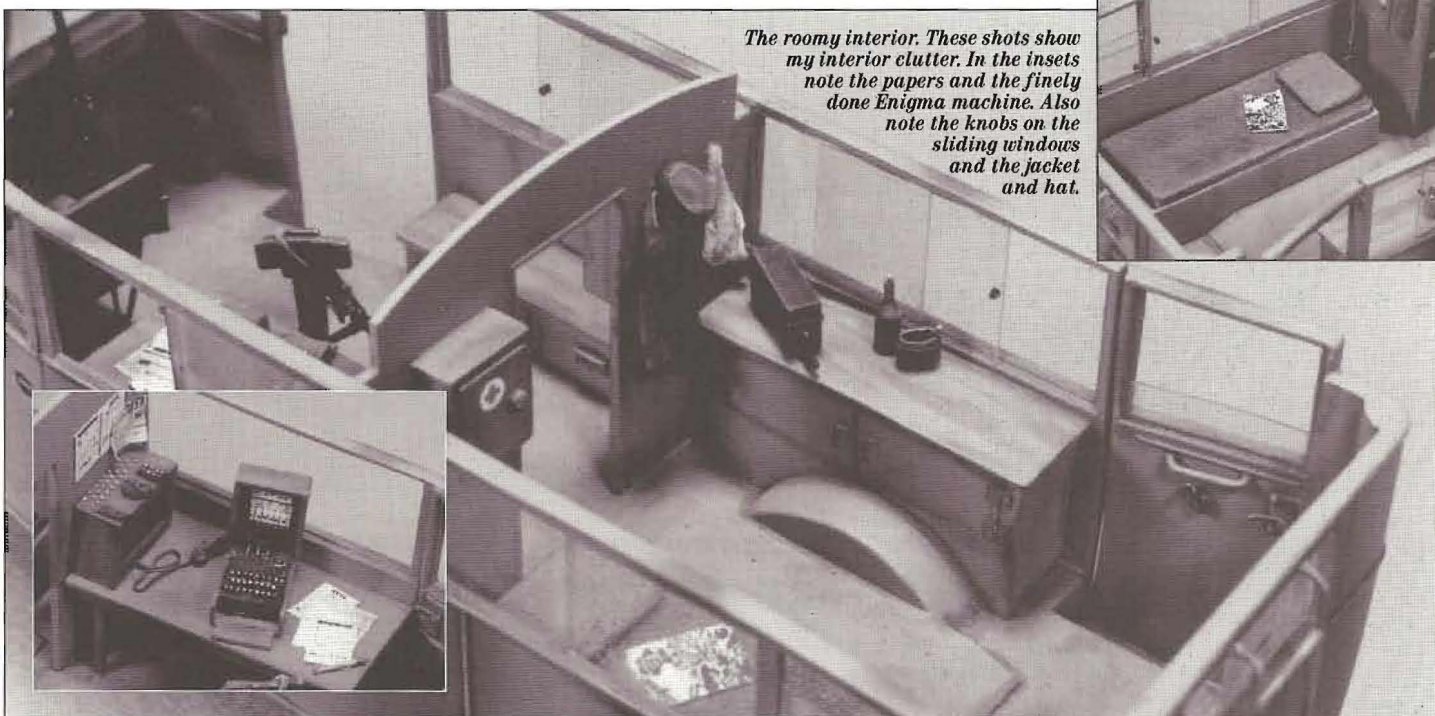
The DES trailer.



The drivers seat



The roomy interior. These shots show my interior clutter. In the insets note the papers and the finely done Enigma machine. Also note the knobs on the sliding windows and the jacket and hat.



The Trailer

The trailer is a recent DES release of the Sander Anhang 53. This was more or less a multi-purpose trailer (eventually soldiers in any army make things "multi-purpose"). The DES version is produced as an artillery observation unit and includes a gorgeous range finding device.

Produced in crisp tan resin the SdAnh53 was a pleasure to build after experiencing the Opel bus. With the exception of a small bubble that needed filling the kit is free of flash or blemishes. My example, however, did have a broken mudguard which needed gluing together and sanding down. The kit provides two lengths of different diameter steel wire with which to make different handles and attachment points. I found the steel too hard for bending and shaping so I replaced it all with brass rod. Little else needed to be done to the kit and it was painted and weathered the same as the bus.

Wrap it up... I'll take it

My feelings for this kit are mixed. It provides a very nice opportunity to have a unique vehicle in your collection. The only other bus kits I know of are old vacu-formed Airmodel and Schmidt productions. This kit also lends itself to numerous other possibilities including a mobile surgical room or an ambulance with stretchers. The kit does include

some nice detailing in some areas, including the tires and the various accessories provided. Unfortunately, I found the kit was more difficult to put together than I think was necessary, especially when it comes to the undercarriage and drive train. The resin is quite brittle and snapped several times. I can't see why it was easier to provide the white plastic parts instead of the Italeri ones, as Azimut has done so often in the past. ADV/Azimut has developed an excellent reputation for quality in

their resin casting over the years, yet their plastic efforts do not even begin to approach that quality. I would have been much more satisfied if the kit had been offered with the more familiar materials.

Even though I feel the kit could have been better, it certainly does provide an opportunity to create a much used yet little represented WWII vehicle and, being an ardent fanatic of German armor, I had to have it. Just add a lot of patience to your super glue!

—Al Iglesias

MMiR RECCE

Azimut Productions/Ironsides Opel Blitz Omnibus Kommanderwagen. Kit number IR020. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Retail price approximately \$50.00.

DES Kit Sd. Ahh 53 Trailer. Kit number 35052. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Retail price approximately \$30.00. Look for this kit through Red Lancers or (surprisingly) Squadron Mail Order. They have been known to stock the line. You also can check directly with the manufacturer at DES Kit, 27, rue des Hauts de Bonne Eau, 94500 Champigny sur Marne, France.

References

Kraftzeuge und Panzer der Reichwehr, Wehrmacht und Bundeswehr, by Werner Oswald, Motorbuch Verlag, 1991. In the Motorbuch line, it covers all the transport of German Army this century. Only one photo of the bus, but interesting reading for the Wehrmachtphile.

Opel at War, by Eckhart Bartels, Schiffer Publishing, 1992. The best bus reference. Nice line drawings including one of the kit subject. Great value too, at around ten bucks.



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I'll bet that if I had a hundred average armor Joes make a list of their ten most wanted kits, the Type 90 wouldn't be on one of them. I know it caught me by surprise when I first heard about it. I am a bit of a modern freak myself, so it definitely peaked my curiosity.

Rumor has it that the release of this kit was precipitated in Japan by a popular Godzilla movie. Type 90s spent some time trying to poke holes in the big guy. Although the subject is lukewarm by American standards, this kit sold out of stock in its home market in just two short weeks.

The Type 90 is the Japanese answer to the modern main battle tank. Rather than invest in foreign

technology, the Japanese decided to build their own MBT from scratch. Although it's very similar to NATO tanks such as the Leopard and the M1 Abrams, it has some very unique features. Unlike NATO tanks, it incorporates a fully automatic loading system which brings the crew down from four to three.

The Type 90 also has a hydraulic suspension installed on four of the six roadwheels on each side, and these can be adjusted as the surrounding terrain dictates.

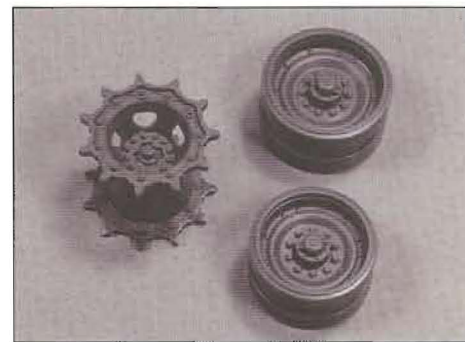
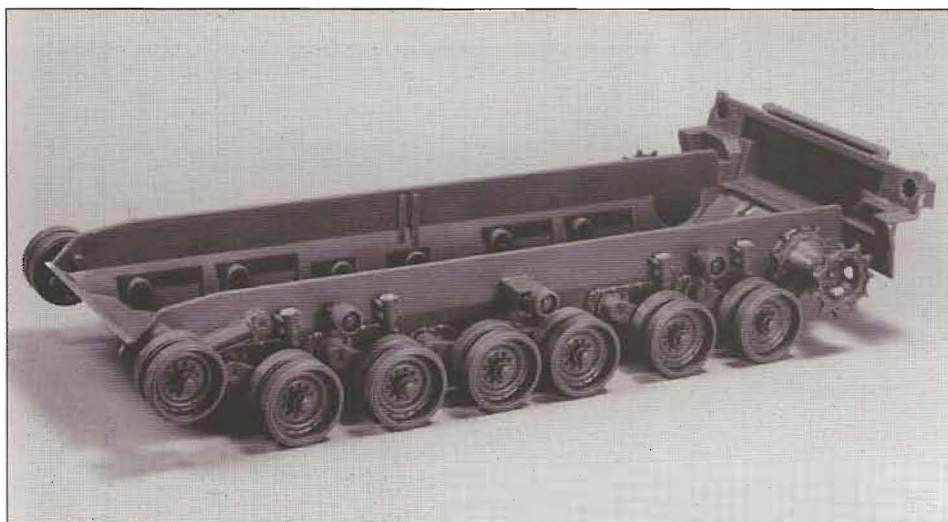
This tank is in the family though. It uses a laminate armor similar to all NATO tanks and the turret conjures up the Leopard 2. The Type 90 also has a separate ammo bin reminiscent of the M1. It uses

the basic 120mm gun and it can keep up with its Allied cousins. The power plant is a Mitsubishi V-10 fuel injected diesel and it scoots the 50-ton Type 90 down the road at 42 mph.

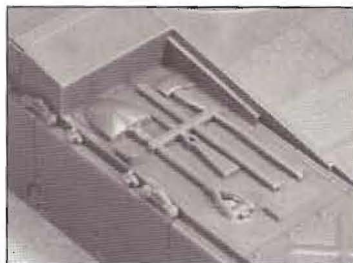
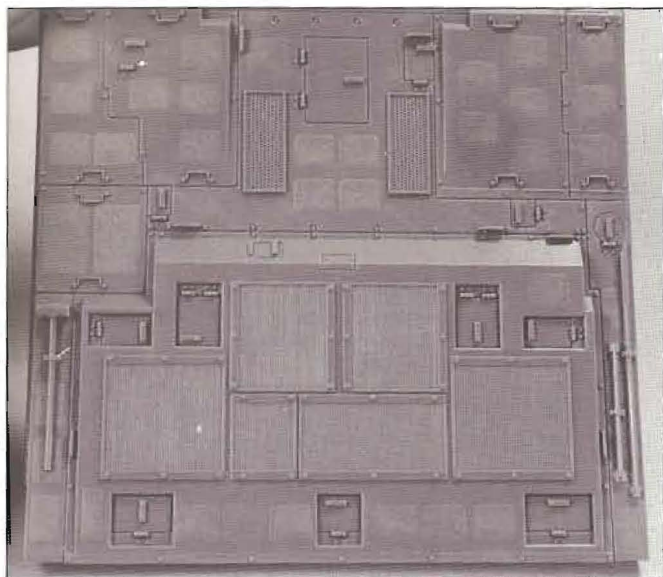
Type 90 san

Have no doubts, this is a marvelous kit to build. It represents some of Tamiya's best work. The level of detail is very similar to, but definitely surpasses, their T-72 kit. The kit practically falls together. From a strictly 'review' point of view this kit is incredibly simple. I haven't got too much to say. That's pretty rare really. There were no construction pitfalls and no real negative points popped up.

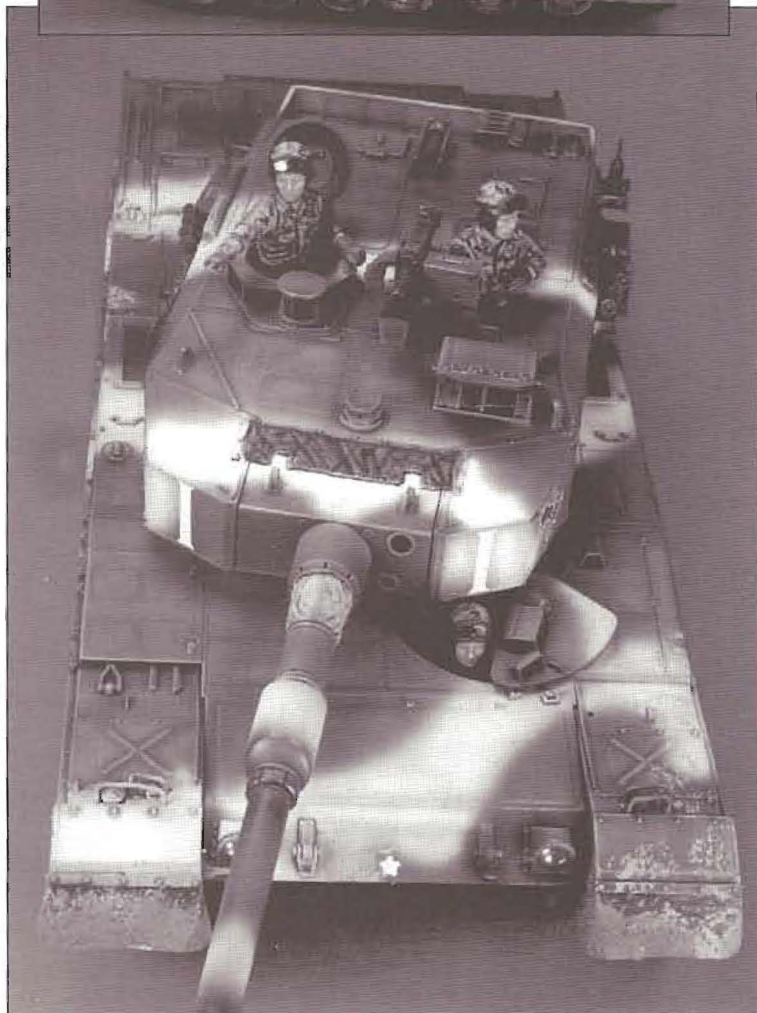
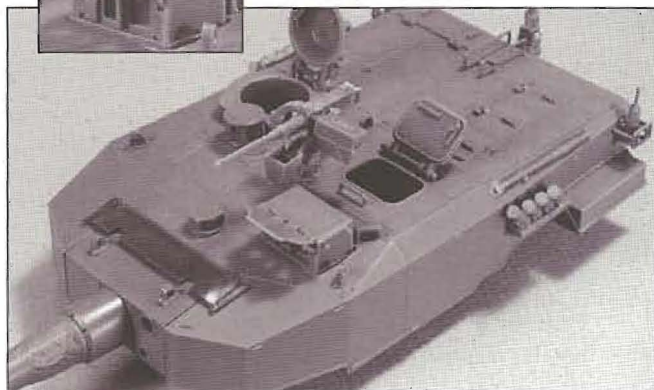
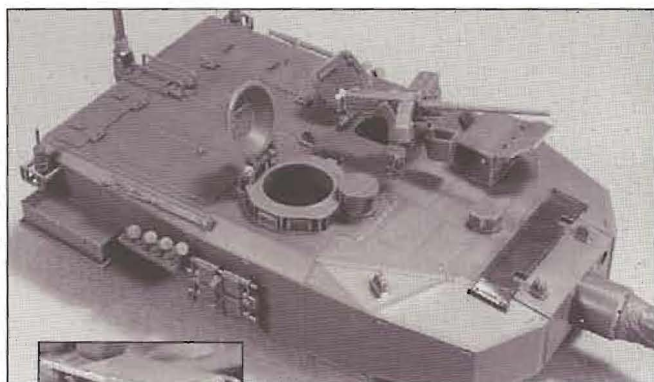
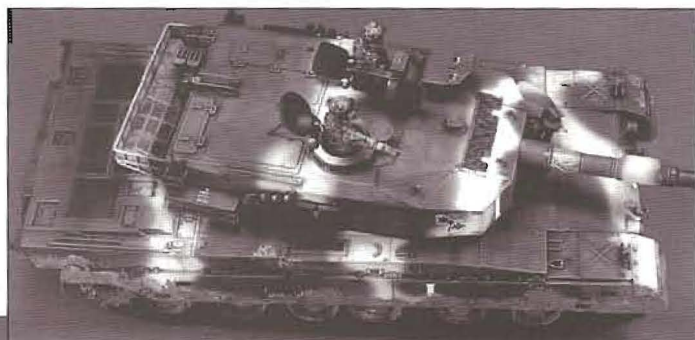
The lower hull and suspension are a breeze. There's a lot of detail packed in this area and it's too bad the skirts hide all. I was impressed by the fact that everything lined up and was perfectly level. No guess work.



Left: the hull during construction. It doesn't get any better than this! Below: the suspension components. The bottom wheel is for the idler.



Far left: the gorgeous back deck. Left: the neat little shrouded tools. Below left and right: the turret basket before and after. Middle left: Mount Fuji's eye view. Note the drybrushing on the anti-skid surfaces and other details. Large shot at lower left: same deal. Bottom right: on the prow. Check out the MV lenses. Below: the turret under construction. The mantlet cover is vinyl. Inset: the main sight. The periscopes all get clear styrene sheet pieces inserted.



The tracks are some of the best in vinyl I've seen. Really superb stuff. Interestingly, the tracks are shown as all steel types. Skipping ahead somewhat, the mantlet cover is also in vinyl. This is a nice touch because the actual cover is flexible. Be careful taking this off, it is easy to damage.

The tooling and engraving on the engine deck just about left me breathless. The anti-skid texture, vent detail and grab handles (with undercuts no less) are all gee-whiz territory. This is truly state of the art stuff. I'm not just throwing these accolades around either. The photos will bear this out.

There is was curious bit of molded on detail on the right fender. This is the type of thing that usually sends modelers screaming. Not only is it executed well, the area is eventually covered by a shroud. The tools can just be discerned beneath it.

The turret continues this orgy of detail. The sighting devices are all rendered as are the anti-skid areas. If you look closely there are faint texture lines on the turret side. Unbelievable.

A sheet of clear styrene is provided for the all the various vision blocks and sighting equipment. I forgot, but remember to tint these pink. Most modern tanks have this feature. It's actually a thin red coating meant to break up incoming lasers which could blind the crew.

The turret basket is another area that would normally be a hump to build in styrene. Here it's a breeze. Fine mesh is included for the liner and a template indicates the exact size.

If I could bitch about one thing on the turret, it would be the gun barrel. I hate two-piece barrels. If Tamiya can build a one piece fuselage for their Phantom, they can make us one-piece barrels (ain't I picky?).

The kit contains the option of being set up for deep wading. A snorkel trunk for the TC's cupola and various plugs and covers can all be added to show the tank ready to take a dip.

The only modification I made to the kit was the addition of MV lenses to the headlights.

Winter paint

I painted my tank using a Japanese book as a reference (see recce). The winter scheme was a little different. This same scheme is also recommended in the instructions. I used Testor Model Master enamels and the kit's decals.

I drybrushed paying careful attention to all that beautiful tooling detail. I used very little paint on the brush and slowly brought out the fine texturing. A

little Cellucel mud was added to the fenders and roadwheels for that lived in look.

The two figures in the turret are provided with the kit and the driver figure is from an older Type 74 kit. I painted them using artist's oils.

90 mph

I whole heartily recommend this kit. It is probably the best armor kit I've ever built in terms of level of detail and ease of construction. I dig the modern stuff myself, but I would hate to see anyone pass it up just because it's not WWII German. Build one for the same reason you climb a mountain—because it's there. Build it so you can see just what Tamiya is capable of. Build it because it's bitchin'!

—Chris "Panzer" Mrosko

MMIR RECCE

Tamiya JGSDF Type 90 Tank. Kit number 35208. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail \$45.00.

References

Super Tank Type 90. Shigeki Miyajima Publishing, 1994. Talk about obscure. This 64 page book was a great source of information and inspiration for this kit. I found mine in the L.A. area where Japanese publications are fairly common. Check with a mail order source in Japan such as Hobbylink Japan. About \$30.00.

Tank Magazine has been in love with this tank since it was first proposed. Check out the following issues.

Tank Magazine Vol. 17, Number 2, 1994. Delta Publishing. Several good color shots of the tank on parade.

Tank Magazine Vol. 15, Number 12, 1992. Delta Publishing. More good color pix of the Type 90 on the firing range.

Tank Magazine Vol. 13, Number 13, 1990. Delta Publishing. Three nice-sized shots.

Your Reference HQ!



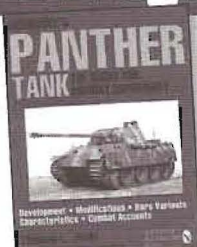
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Shoot & Scoot

Jazzing up the old Italeri M109 with new goodies from Royal Models and KMC



The American made M109 is the self propelled artillery weapon of choice for the Israeli Defense Force. This excellent weapon system forms the main artillery component of the armored brigade artillery battalions of the IDF. It has been used in all the recent Israeli conflicts, beginning with the Yom Kippur wars of 1973, and it saw extensive use during the invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The Italeri M109A1/A2 kit is a relatively well detailed kit. Released more than ten years ago, it does show its age when compared with today's releases. Much to our modeling joy, two relatively new after market companies have come to the rescue by producing excellent super detail sets for it.

To create the Israeli M109A3, I used Royal Model's M109 AL IDF Microdetail Set. The quality is superb. However, be warned that this is a micro detail set, as fittingly stated in the box. Appropriately, all the parts are diminutive. Although this project was not a difficult one, I found it time consuming, mostly because I paced myself so as not to get "photo-etch burnout." The amount of brass detail parts contained in the three sheets is extensive. Those of you

with ten thumbs like me might experience some desperation when assembling, due to the teeny size of the parts involved. However, with some patience the result is superb!

Upper hull assembly

I started my model with the assembly of the hull. No major problems here except putting some gaps around the front end. The Israeli M109A3 that I was using as reference does not have the fittings for the flotation kits (not much good in the desert). So I removed all the indications of them. Some Israeli M109s do have them, so check your references.

A characteristic feature of the Israeli M109's are the welded straps on the top of the hull to prevent personnel from slipping off while climbing. Royal Model provides these bars in photo-etch form. They consist of 19 different strips nicely detailed right down to the weld beads. The instruction sheet contains an excellent diagram clearly showing their location. Study the diagram and work patiently. I outlined the spacing of the bars by drawing pencil lines on the hull, and once satisfied with their location, I used a small straight edge as a guide to glue the strips.

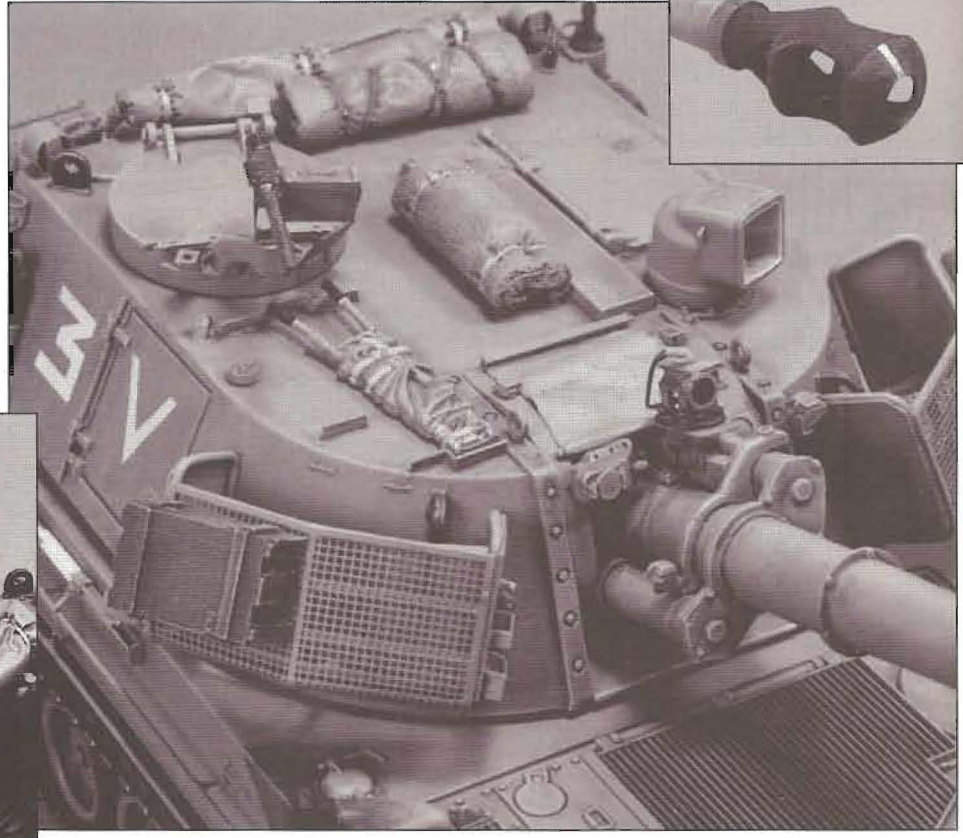
Another unique feature of the Israeli M109 is the side rails attached to the hull sides to stow personnel and other miscellaneous equipment. Royal Model provides separate photo-etched pieces that assemble into the rail support brackets, 32 pieces in all. When the brackets are assembled, you are supposed to attach tiny photo-etched bolt heads, two per bracket, for a total of 28.

Assembly of the rails starts with shaving off the kit's molded-on bolt heads. I attached the rail brackets at these locations. Again, using a drawn pencil line to establish the location and using a straight edge as a guide, I glued in place all the rail support bracket bases. The rail support brackets are glued on these, perpendicular to the bases. RM provides two coils of soft wire to use in fashioning the rails. I found that replacing these with straight sections of brass rod was a bit easier.

A note of warning. I recommend that you do the rail assembly as your last step, just before painting. Once assembled, the rails are extremely fragile and prone to breaking. Their location does not help much either. A conscious effort must be made when picking up this model to not grab it by the sides.



Top and right: the turret under construction. All the pieces are Royal except the gun, commander's hatch and the rear boxes, which are KMC. Far right: the brass skid strips from Royal; the ID plate is VP. Above: the kit barrel and the KMC replacement. Large shot and below: the finished turret. Note the RM stowage and the VP .30 cal MG. Inset: the muzzle brake.



Even with all the care I exercised when handling the model, I broke mine off several times, a couple of times while drybrushing the kit.

Other details provided by RM are the spare track racks, the aiming rods support brackets and the tow cable support brackets, complete with butterfly wing nuts! Another separately sold detail set by RM is the M109 AL IDF Equipment set, which provides all the necessary Israeli equipment to stow on this kit. Included in this set are resin tow cable pads, and a plethora of boxes, bedrolls and tarps to dress up your M109. I added other miscellaneous hull details such as a vehicle ID plate from the Verlinden Line. I replaced the resin aiming rods with separate styrene rod. Also the kit's headlights were drilled out and replaced with MV lenses.

Turret

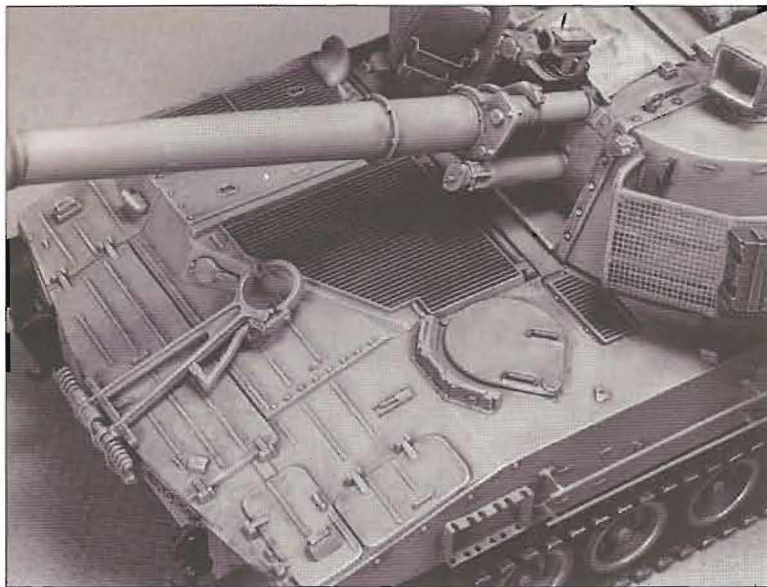
The salient feature of the M109 and that which draws attention to this vehicle, is its impressive 155mm gun. The beautiful Kendall Model Company (KMC) M109A2 SPH Update Set was used to replace the inaccurate Italeri part. The KMC kit, consisting

of 26 parts, primarily corrects and details the kit's 155mm cannon however it also includes a replacement for the commander's hatch, four detailed rear hull stowage boxes for the turret, and a nifty MIAM collimator aiming device, which has excellent diorama possibilities. The KMC's resin gun barrel is a vast improvement over the stock Italeri part. All the parts were beautifully cast, the usual standard for KMC kits. My only problem with the kit is that it leaves you wanting for more. I would have gladly traded the collimator device for a corrected and accurate replacement of the kit's telescope ballistic cover. Also two additional stowage boxes to replace the lower hull boxes over the M109 spades would have been handy. Get good reference material when assembling this kit, since the instructions consist only of an exploded view. Although very well done, it makes the locating of some parts a bit tricky. I misjudged the placement of the recoil cylinders' bypass line (the curved tubing that runs over the barrel and connects both recoil cylinders), after gluing it I had to remove it to locate the short piece of flat rod (to which the muzzle speed counter is attached.) I cannot give you any part

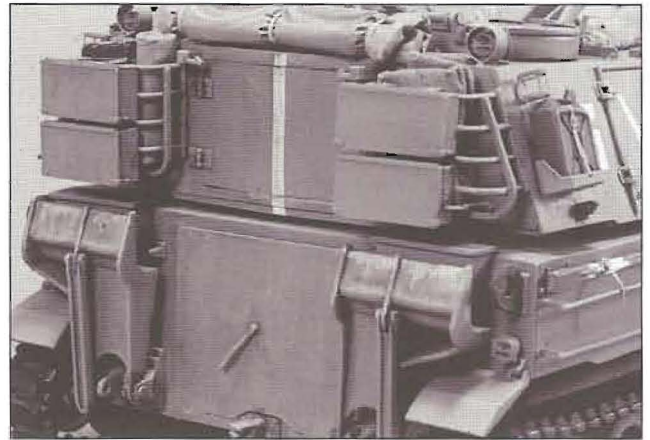
numbers to guide you here because KMC does not number their parts in the instruction sheet. I followed the assembly sequence as shown in Italeri's instructions for the turret. Assemble the gun rotor shield (Italeri calls it mantlet, part 63) into the gun carriage (part 77). To this I added the KMC's gun mount assembly, consisting of the recuperator, the recoil cylinders and the base for the gun barrel. The gun barrel itself was attached much later, during the final assembly steps. This made the handling of the turret easier and prevented damage. The well rendered muzzle brake is made up of two parts, cast flat on a thin resin carrier sheet. Sand them down on wet/dry sand paper. I fashioned the canvas weather cover over the rotor shield from lead foil.

Royal Model provided a muzzle speed counter with a wire lead and it is the crowning touch to this beautiful gun assembly.

Next to the gun and on the front of the turret are the IDF style stowage baskets. These are the most prominent feature of the Israeli M109. RM provides photo-etched screens that are bent into the basket's unique shape. I fashioned a template from paper to practice bending and getting the right shape



This page: lots to look at! check out all the detail on this baby. All the bits really improved the look of the kit in my opinion. One of my favorite items is the muzzle speed counter which is visible in the shot at left (on the top of the mantlet).



before tackling the photo-etched baskets. With the screen folded, the resin solid end pieces were super glued in place, followed by the baskets inside tube frames, which I fashioned from styrene tubing. Using styrene rod over brass rod made the cutting, bending and fitting easier. The basket assemblies were then super glued on to the turret and additional details, such as the jerry can holders were added last.

I ended up breaking off the thin photo-etched jerry can holder frames. These will be replaced with flat styrene stock at a later date.

Other modifications I did on the turret consisted of shaving the inaccurate hinge mechanisms off the turret side doors and replacing them with styrene rod and scratch-built hinges. As mentioned earlier, the telescope ballistic cover is inaccurate. I cut and removed the solid plastic lens and replaced it with a clear lens. My references show that the mounting of this cover is much different than the American M109A2. I assume this is because the Israeli vehicle might be a converted M109A1, which used a different cover. I detailed this cover mounting with styrene rod and Grandt Line bolts. Also, the Israeli method of stowage is quite different from the American version so all the upper turret's molded on detail was shaved off. Royal model provides plenty of miscellaneous equipment to detail the turret and the commander's cupola. The commander's .30 cal. MG is from the Verlinden line.

Painting & finishing touches

I painted my model with the new Testors Model Master Israeli Armor Sand/Gray. The paint went on beautifully, followed by an over spray of the base color lightened up with a bit of white on the upper

surfaces. For weathering, I sprayed the model with the new Model Master Flat Coat, then used washes of raw and burnt umber artist's oils. The model was dry brushed with Model Master Armor Sand. To replicate the worn spots on the spades, I dry brushed them with aluminum. Similarly, to replicate the worn spots on the M109s aluminum hull and fittings, I dry brushed these areas lightly with Testors aluminum.

The tracks were painted with Floquil's Rail Brown and the pads and the rubber wheels with Floquil Grimy Black washed with black artists oils and dry brushed with steel. The markings are a combination of Verlinden Israeli rub on markings and decals from my spares box. ☺

—José Ramos

MMiR RECCE

Italeri M109E. Kit number 0246.

Royal Model's M109 AL IDF Microdetail Set. Kit number 101. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail \$37.45.

Royal Model's M109 AL equipment. Kit number 102. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail \$19.95.

Kendall Model Company (KMC) M109A2 Turret Update Set 1. Kit number 35-1003. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail \$14.99.

References

Israel Armor Might, by Samuel Katz, Concord Publications, Inc., 1989.

Battleground Lebanon, by Samuel Katz, Concord Publications, 1990. In the "in-action" type format, both are chock-full of good IDF armor stuff. Battleground Lebanon also has color artwork. Both are cheap, too.

Modern Military Powers Israel, general editor Stan Morse, The Military Press, 1994. A good all around book on the IDF. Includes all weapons used. A great addition to your library if you like the modern stuff. Can be found at a discount. Poke around.

Warmachines No. 1, M108, M109, M109A1/A2, Military Photo File by Willy Peters and Francois Verlinden, Verlinden Publications, 1990. The best of the best for this vehicle. Most likely used by Royal as their main reference, it contains great color close-up shots of the vehicle, including the kit subject. A superb value at around fourteen dollars.

For more general information on the Italeri kit see:

Modeling the M109, by Steven Sewell IPMS/USA, Fall 1985.

M109 at Fort Carson, by Jim Swift IPMS/USA, Fall 1985.



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Commie ack-ack

Azimut's resin
shell thrower
in 1/35th



The Soviets were pretty hip on weapons technology in the thirties, especially artillery. Their main heavy anti-aircraft artillery piece was the 85mm ZP Obr. 39 gun. It was roughly the equivalent of the German 88, but unlike the Germans, the frugal Soviets thought it was a bit expensive for use as an anti-tank gun.

Like much of the pre-war Soviet army material, the 85mm gun was captured in massive numbers in the opening months of the war and for some time after (surprisingly). The Germans welcomed the extra ordinance and were quick to put them back in service. They were re chambered to 88mm at a

factory in Northern Italy and then issued to home flak units. By mid-1994 there were over 900 in service. It's said that towards the end of the war some were issued to front line units as either artillery or anti-tank guns.

Ack-ack

This kit is a relatively new addition to the Azimut line and a welcome one at that. At first glance it looks like a simple kit to build and it never really did present much of a challenge.

Clean-up the various resin parts is fairly easy. Not many have substantial overpours, which is a refreshing change on a resin kit. By the way, all the parts except the axles and some of the linkages are resin. The axles are white metal and the linkage arms are photo-etch.

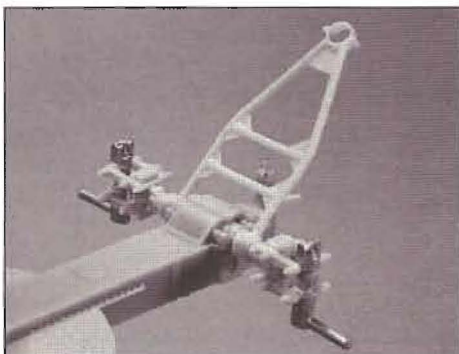
The main component of the carriage is the cruciform base and it's one large casting. The folding arms are also single pieces. All this greatly speeds construction. I had the carriage together in no time. The only tricky part is the axles. They can be assembled in either travel or firing position. This is basically just higher or lower. The white metal axle bases are assembled between two resin struts. These in turn

mount on large lugs which emanate from the carriage. All this is boku delicate. I used liberal amounts of Zap-a-Gap accelerator to ensure sturdiness.

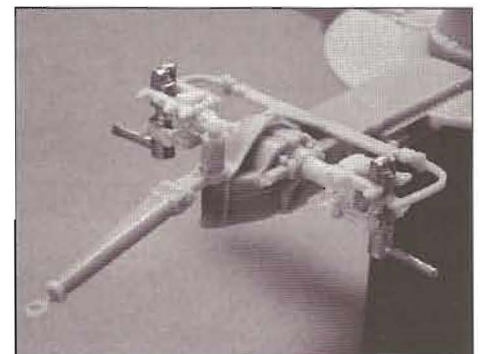
The wheels are pre-drilled for the axles, but the holes are a bit shallow. You can't drill these too deep or you'll go through the face of the wheel (not good). I marked one axle shaft to the correct length then trimmed the rest. I'd suggest installing the wheels before mounting the axles. They're less likely to get broken this way (alas, this is not what I did).

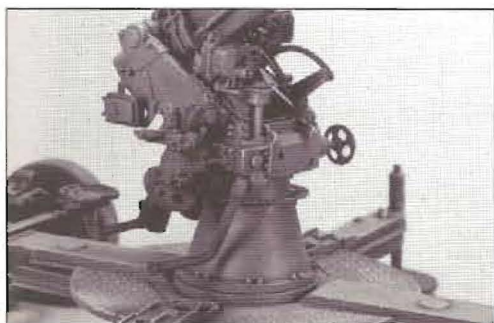
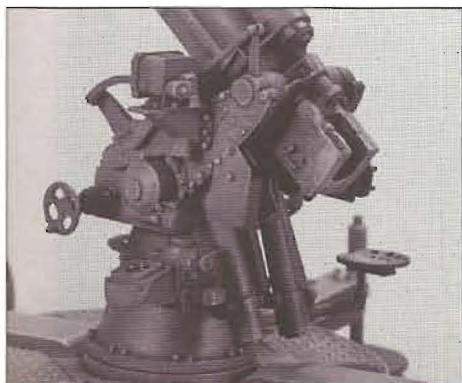
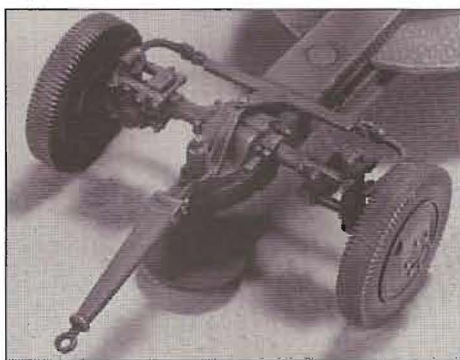
For some odd reason the hubs are shown as separate in the instructions, but mine were molded as one piece with the wheels.

The towing arm/steering mechanism is a



Either end of the carriage under construction. The white metal axles are evident. Note the finely rendered steering arms and travel lock. This is why Azimut gets the big bucks.





Upper left and right: the finished ends of the carriage. Above: looking down on the firing platform. Each of the raised dots has a hole in the center—just like the real gun. Remainder of shots this page: various views of the gun laying equipment, all superbly rendered in resin. Note the photo-etched arms for the elevation gear on the left hand side of the gun.

gorgeous little subassembly, composed of seven delicately molded parts. This where the boys at Azimut earn their pay. Good stuff. You can position it in several ways and leave it workable. It would be just my luck that it would break, so I glued in position.

Gunplay

Most of the parts in this kit are on the gun itself, so as you'd expect, this is where the pace slows a bit.

Azimut provides no written instructions, but does provide nice line drawings. Two are shown, one for each side of the gun. There are at least 40 small pieces to add to the gun and sorting them all is a chore. Once they are all identified it's not too tough a gig.

Beware the recuperator housings. As provided they are too long. To gauge the correct length, install their braces first. This will indicate the proper dimension. Doing this results in a high elevation for the gun (you can't create a workable gun—this ain't plastic, pal). All of the photos I've seen of the gun show it pointing up—at the planes.

The remainder of the construction process entails adding more small bits to the gun. Many of these do not have locating points and their proper placement requires careful study of the instructions.

The main linkage arm is cast in resin (impressively) and my decision to replace it was conveniently influenced by the part's sudden departure into my carpet. I used brass rod. Two of the other

linkage parts are provided in photo-etch, which is a nice touch. I hate it when etched parts provided represent dimensional parts. This is not the case here and their use was the perfect finishing touch.

Paint me green

I painted my piece overall in Polly Scale Black Green, then went back over the gun with a lighter color, Panzer Olive Green. I made sure this only hit the higher areas. The result is a pleasing shadow effect which become even more apparent after dry brushing. When the paint was dry, I added a wash of heavily diluted burnt umber oil paint. I use Testors Model Master airbrush thinner as a vehicle for the oil paint (don't ask me why).

I dry brushed the gun in a pale shade of green and gun metal around the breech and the tread plates. The tires were painted dark gray and dry

brushed with brown. I like to dust my tires with gray pastels to make them look rubbery.

It's a basic truth of the universe that many of the smaller bits on the gun will pop off during the dry brushing process. I accepted this as my karma and moved on.

There are no markings to add, so that's it!

This was one of the best resin kits I've built. The parts were easy to clean-up and the assembly is trouble free. I felt that much of the detail can't be truly appreciated until it's painted. I think I unintentionally built the gun faster than any previous kit of this type. There are many interesting diorama possibilities considering its use by the Germans, too (The Flak Vixens of Dusseldorf?).

This would make a great weekend project, too. Good goin' Azimut!

—Ken Dugan

MMiR RECCE

Azimut Russian 85mm ZP Obr. 39 AA Gun. Kit number 35087. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail is \$95.50.

References

Scarce on a good day. Here's what I found.

Weapons of the Third Reich, an Encyclopedic survey of all small arms, artillery and special weapons of the German land forces 1939-1945, by Terry Gander and Peter Chamberlain, Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1979. Long since out of print, this is the best source of dope on anything used by the Germans in WWII. Good description of the 85 and a few photos.



Sovereign SdKfz. 247, complete kit \$68.00



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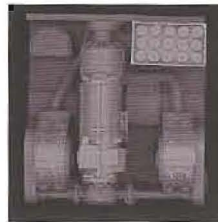
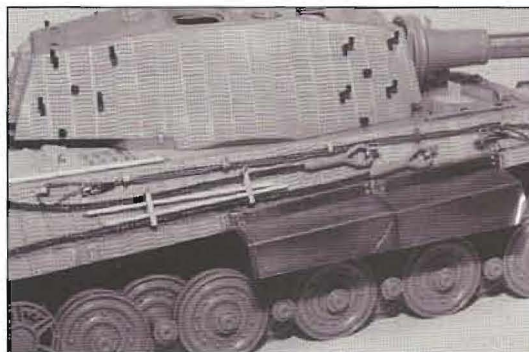


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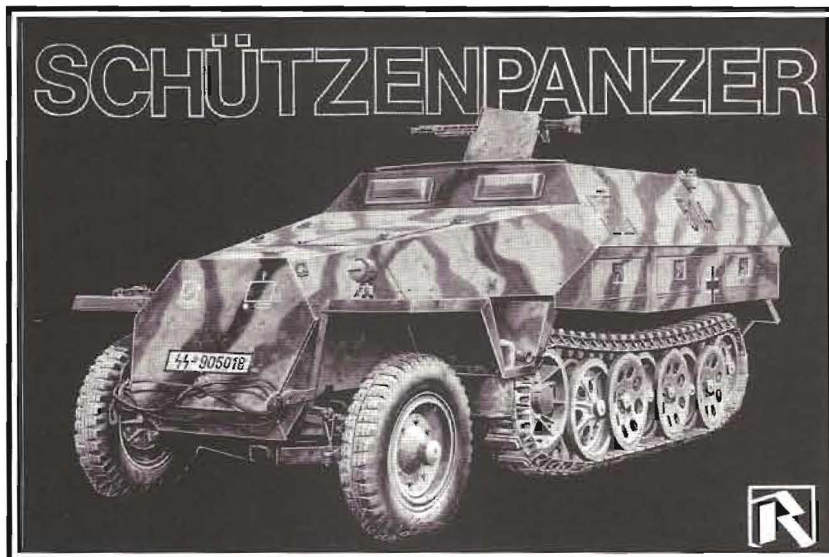


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Shermy with big gun

Egads! It's Azimut again with the cool M12 SPG



It came our turn to go into the little craft, and we went in. We had a young navy officer who wasn't gonna take us up that beach. I knew dang good and well that if we took our 155 off in that water, that would be all she wrote. We could swim ashore, but we'd never make it, we were loaded with so much paraphernalia. So I ended up taking my gun out on him. Shoved it in his mouth. Can you believe that? He wanted to get the hell out of there. He was the guy in The Caine Mutiny, the one rattling the steel balls in his hand. He wanted to dump us. Yeah, that's close enough, go on. He finally got us to where we were in about three feet of water and he said, "I just can't go any more." Fine, let down the ramp.

This self-propelled 155 is nothing but half a tank. Instead of a turret on top, it has a 155 howitzer. You don't have a steering wheel. You just pull on this and you go to the right. The other way, you pull to the left. Pull 'em both you stop. For some reason, we got our signals crossed. Corporal Rackley was driving and watching me. I threw up my hand. He thought I meant stop. So I assaulted the beach of Normandy in the inglorious fashion of somersaulting through the air and landing on my back. All I could see was the tank out of which I had pitched. It couldn't stop in that soft sand. The guys for a long time teased me that they had never seen me move so fast. [Laughs] I just got out of the way. It would have gone right over me. I've always contended that when the Germans saw that kind of clown-acting, it scared the hell out of them. [Laughs]

I was very calm in laying my battery. We got our first order to fire. There's 6,400 degrees in an aiming circle. We were 90 degrees off. We'll never know where those shells came down. I just hope and pray I didn't hurt anybody who was out of the war. I hope it went into the ocean.

—From *"The Good War"* Studs Terkel, Pantheon Books, 1984.

In December 1943 while planning for the invasion of the continent a heavy self-propelled gun seemed a useful proposition. Seventy four 155mm Gun Motor Carriage M-12 vehicles were reconstructed and modernized by Baldwin Locomotive Company from the 100 in storage and training and placed in service with the US First and Third Armies.

In campaign they proved extremely useful by allowing artillery to keep up with the tanks in the Normandy breakout and for heavy bombardment of cities and fortified positions. Special concrete piercing fuses allowed high explosive rounds to penetrate up to several feet of reinforced concrete by direct fire.

The vehicle consisted of an M-3 chassis with the radial air cooled engine moved forward. The available space allowed a French designed 155mm M-1917 or M-1918 gun to be mounted.

A bulldozer-like spade was attached to the rear hull to reduce any rearward movement of the carriage by recoil forces. The spade winch was operated by hand, using a simple cable and pulley system. Special ramps stored on the

front fenders of the vehicle allowed increased elevation for maximum gun range.

The M-12 had a crew of six attendants. The driver and commander are located in the steering area compartment, two crewmen sat on the port side of the gun and two sat on cushions on the spade when it was in the stored position. Other members of the detachment, ammunition and cargo stores are transported on an M-30 cargo carrier which was an M-12 without the gun and spade.

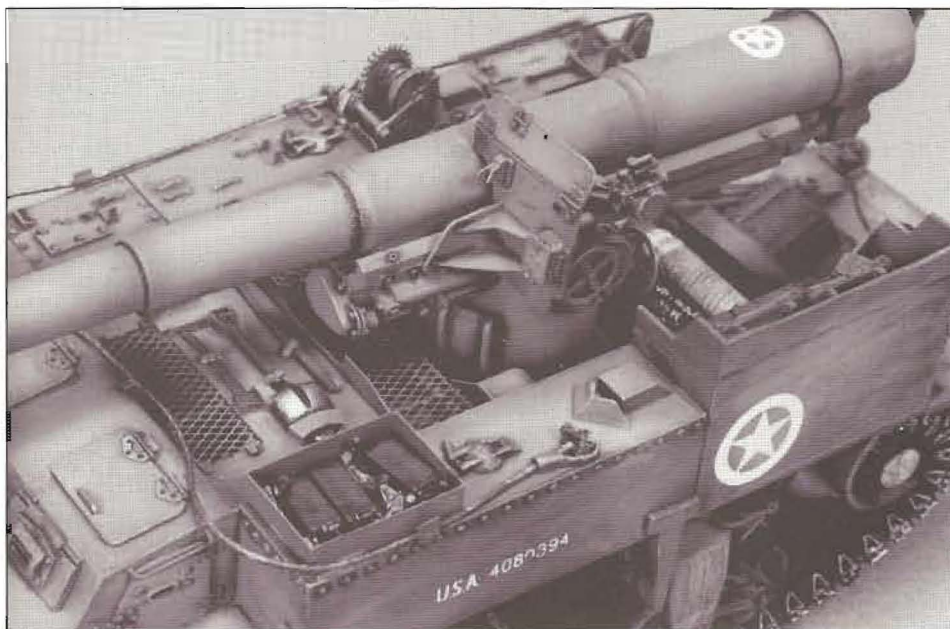
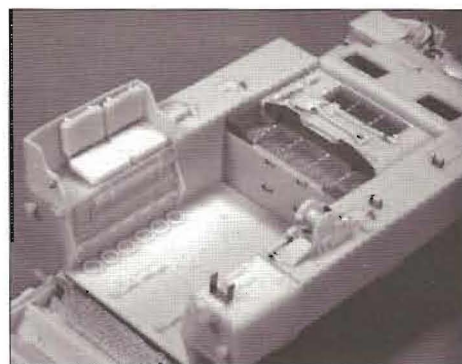
The vehicle could travel at 25 mph, fire rounds at a rate of four per minute and had a range of 18,700 yards with supercharged ammo. The gun used separate loading ammo in powder bags and had a separate primer. It could fire high explosive, armor piercing, shrapnel, white phosphorus and chemical smoke.

Azimut's M-12 was a superb kit both in quality of casting and fidelity of detail. The kit was well packaged and consisted of resin castings, injection molded running gear and a photo-etched fret.

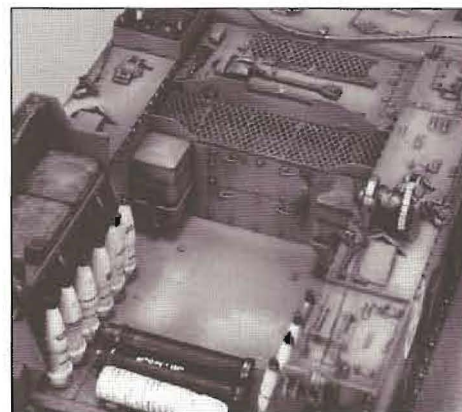
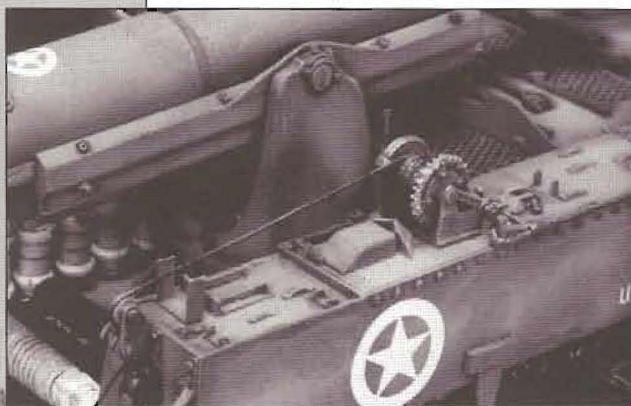
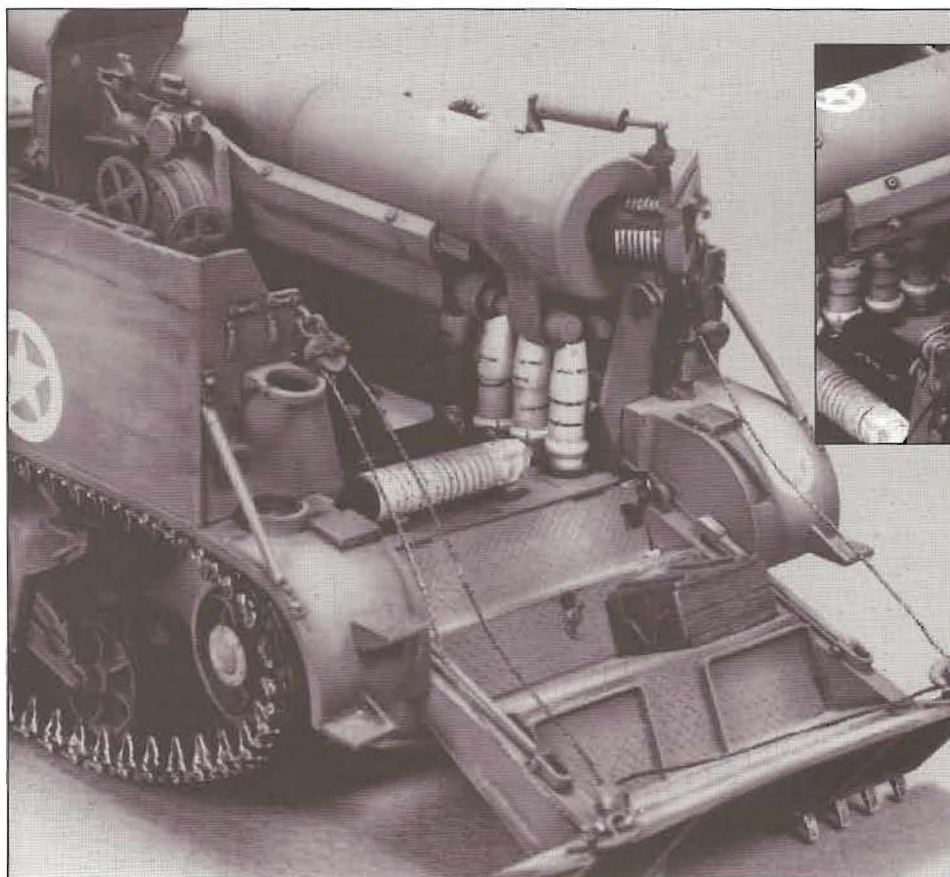
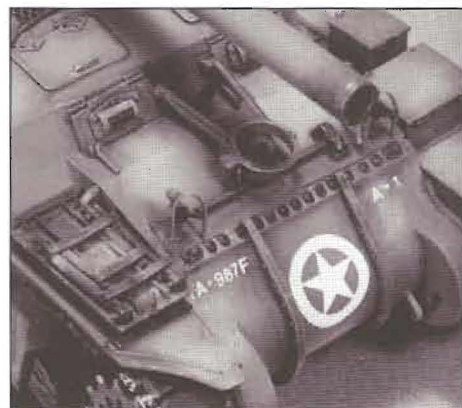
The instructions are simple and easy to follow using the exploded views. Parts were sanded and dry-fitted before using cyanoacrylate glue.

Construction

Step one showed the construction of the hull and transmission. Fenders and floor also are attached at this stage. I removed an extra crew step and cut a weeshaped recess in the starboard rear fender to match my references. Various stowage boxes for tracks and equipment are well detailed and fit snugly with little need



Above left: the hull during construction showing off the many photo-etched parts. Above center: the etched elevation wheels and the gun's base. Above right: the crew compartment. Note the large opening for the engine. Left: The finished and detailed upper hull. Below: the front hull. Note the folded ramp on the starboard side fender. Bottom left: the back end and spade showing the intricate pulley system. Below center: the winch for the pulley system. Bottom right: the gun platform without the gun. I left the pedestal unglued for ease of transport.



for fillers. The crew seats, spade winch and various other attachments are then added. Hatches could be closed or left open to display a crew, if one wished. Many photo-etched parts are provided and enhanced the detail splendidly.

From my spares box I added wing-nuts to the barrel travel lock and cable clamps. I used nylon string for the tow cable since it was not provided with the kit.

Two elevation support ramps are provided and may be built either in the open position for use under the drive sprockets, or closed and stored with wing-nuts on the starboard front fender. Extra bolt heads are applied to the port pannier near the driver's side door and also a raised rib for the fender. Two struts which held the armored crew visors open were made from styrene and attached.

Step two covered the running gear. I replaced the bogies and tracks provided with a set from DML's M4A1, which are the intermediate raised or packed roller type. A choice of either the fancy smooth type drive sprocket or the simple plate type is provided. I selected the one shown in my reference photos. The T51 type track provided is very tight and had to be lengthened. Engine exhausts were scratch built and placed between the second and third bogies together with some bolt heads.

In step three the spade and lower carriage are built. Many small pulleys are needed for the winch system. Care must be taken to allow for threading of the pulleys and their attachment. A diagram was provided showing the layout of the cable system from the winch to the spade. The air filters and other small parts are then attached to the open gun compartment. The vehicle tools are detailed with buckles and straps and attached.

Azimut provided the bottom plate for the hull but no mention of it was made in the instructions. The engine area was left hollow although it begged for an after-market radial engine. It easily could have been seen through the mesh grilles provided. Frames and support ribs from styrene are added to these grilles.

Two resin struts are provided to keep the tracks lined up in position but their positioning was a little off and needed to be corrected. A styrene strip is attached to these struts and to the suspension brackets with four bolt heads showing on the cross brace. Lightening holes are drilled into each of the support ribs of the lower M4 gun carriage.

The Gun

The 155mm gun took center stage in step four. The elevating sector and the connecting rod for the variable recoil mechanism are provided in the kit but not seen in the instructions. The connecting rod needed to be attached to the left upright arm of the top carriage, while the elevating sector goes between the elevating worm and the cradle. The detail was superb and showed the threaded sectors

of the breech block, obturator and the threads on the recoil cylinder piston rod. A photo-etched sighting gear cover with French wording was provided for the housing of the elevating and traversing hand wheels. I located a photo-etched sleeve from my spares box to show the rifling in the 155mm barrel.

Azimut provided shells and separate loading ammo with well detailed tying straps. I added extra shells that had the eyebolt lift plugs and a few metal ammo tubes to the vehicle ammo racks.

Paint and final details

The vehicle was painted with Humbrol colors and weathered using washes and drybrushing. Letraset letters are used for the vehicle markings and Verlinden dry transfers for the stars. The markings depicted a vehicle of the First Army, 987th Field Artillery Regiment. Pastel chalks were rubbed on to create a battle worn look.

Azimut provided a well detailed vehicle that required little added detail or additions to portray an accurate model of the M-12. It went together easily and I would recommend it unreservedly.

—Carlos D'Arcy

MMiR RECCE

ADV/Azimut 155mm M-12 SP Gun. Kit number 35073. Suggested retail approximately \$115.00.

References

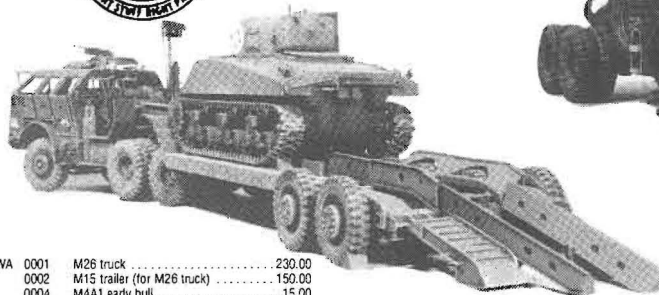
Photographs of M-12 at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

TM 9-345 155 Gun Material and modifications, War Dept. Washington, 1942.

Photocopies of M-12 Technical Manual.



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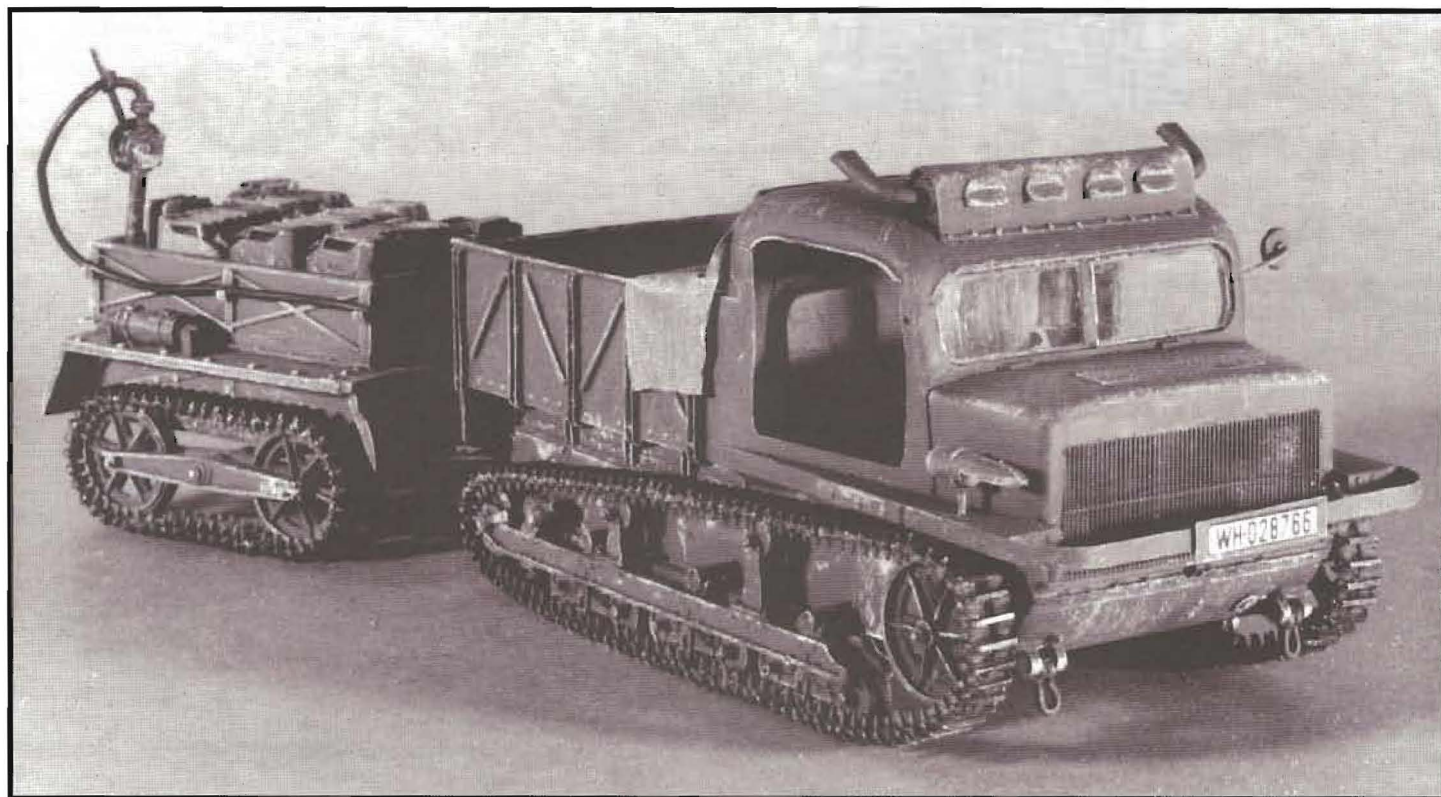
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Teeney Tracked Trailer

An unusual one from the folks at DES Kits



The belated trend towards armor in the French army in the thirties brought with it many questions. Besides that of employment (infantry support or separate armored units?) there was a more elemental one; how to supply tracked vehicles that were independent of hard surface roads. Trucks would not do, as the off road capability of vehicles of the time was abysmal. The answer was half tracked or fully tracked carriers.

The vehicle that resulted from this specification was odd even considering the strange things that came from the French arms industry of this period. The Renault 36R (the full name with its trailer is "Tracteur de Revitaillement pour Chars Renault 36R & remorque citerne UKR") was what would be called today a pickup truck... with tracks. It towed a little trailer, also tracked, that was actually a fuel tank with a bed on top, complete with its own pump and hose. Two hundred and sixty of these were built; they bear a strong resemblance to the Steyr RSO, but are much smaller. It seems that a larger vehicle without the attendant trailer would be a better fix to the solution, but then maybe the Maginot Line didn't leave enough money. (Have you ever been through a Maginot Line fort? After building those, it's a wonder the French could pay attention.) After the fall of France in 1940, the Renaults were impressed into the Wehrmacht.

The Kit

This is actually two kits; the tractor and the trailer. Indeed, they are packaged separately, and only one part (the trailer hitch) from the tractor

was in with the trailer. The molding is good, with only moderate cleanup needed. The resin is soft and easily worked. I'd say the molding is not up to the ADV or HK standard, but better than many of the smaller companies. Also included is a photo-etched fret, very well done. It includes a bunch of what is called 'mechanical keys.' We'd call these wrenches. (And if this was like the Renaults that were imported here in the sixties, you'd need a hell of a lot more.) A small length of wire is supplied to make the fueling hose, and some clear plastic for the windshield.

Construction

The instructions, printed in French and English, are clear enough, although some part placement is not too explicit. Assembly of the tractor is complicated by the open doors (I know it gets cold in France; what was their reasoning here?) and the windshield. This is a kit that can't be built and then painted.

The engine, an absolutely exquisite one piece casting, was painted first, black with a rust wash. Some parts were painted gunmetal (carburetor, magneto) and also given the rust wash. The exhaust manifold was painted rust, then the whole thing set aside to dry.

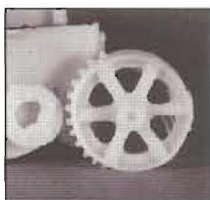
I have to explain now why I did this as a German one. It's not that I'm that enamored of things German; I'm not one of those devoted to the building of German armor to the exclusion of all else. It's just that I had plenty of German stuff to put in the beds of the tractor and trailer...and nothing French of 1940. I thought of covering the beds with tarps,

but a photo showed the tarps were tied down with an ornate lacing system that I didn't think I could build; indeed I had no idea how to do it.

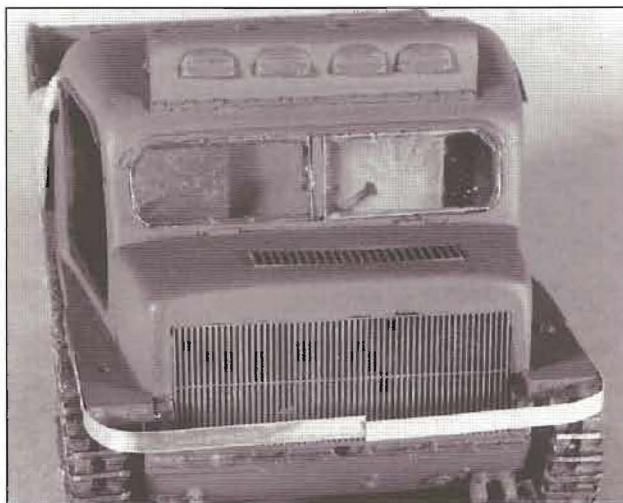
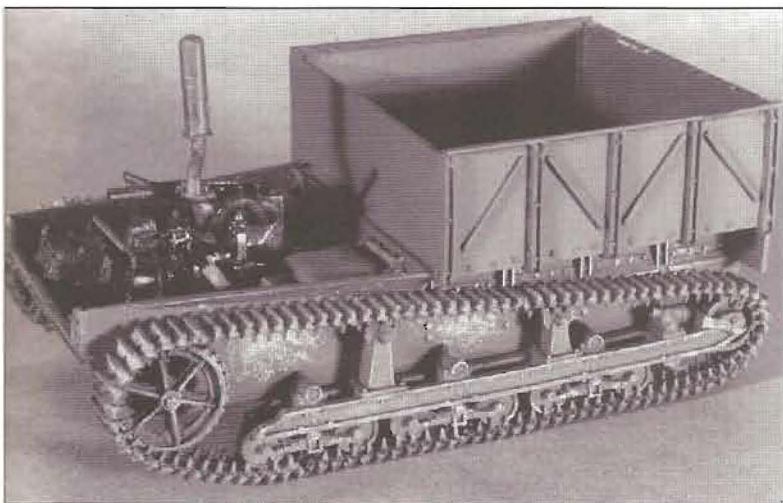
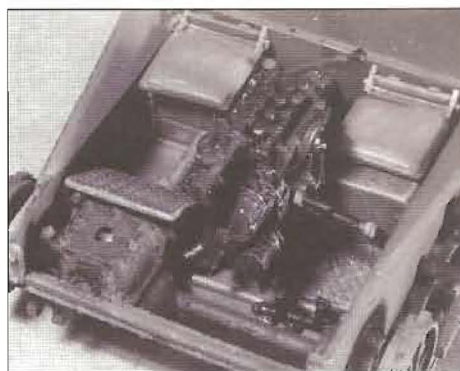
I did the cab interior in a blended French green color, figuring the Germans would paint the exterior, but not go through the bother of painting the interior. The seats were done in khaki, drybrushed with light tan. Pedals and other driving bits, like the gearshift knob and steering levers were done in black, as was the battery. The inside then was dry-brushed with gunmetal. The engine went in next.

While waiting for the various subassemblies to dry, I'd given the lower hull, cab, and bed a coat of Panzer gray, along with the suspension parts. I cleaned out all the mounting holes for the suspension, and glued on the 'road wheels units' (parts 22 and 23). These comprise three two-wheel bogies on leaf springs, idlers, and two return rollers. Now the drive sprockets can go on. Mounting these with super glue only didn't seem like a good idea, so I beefed these up with wire pins; maybe DES intended this, as the drive sprockets are drilled on the back side. Next in the instructions, it says to put on parts 24 and 25. There was no such thing in my box, but I did get an extra drive sprocket. Whatever 24 and 25 are, they weren't missed.

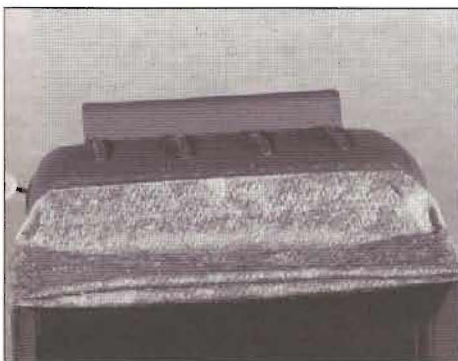
I painted the tracks (rust, black wash, gunmetal drybrushing) and glued three lengths together. Cleaning up the ends for mating wasn't easy, but there's plenty of track, so don't sweat the occasional broken link. I glued the track along the top run, and heated the parts sticking out over the driver and idler with a hair dryer. The tracks conformed



Above left: the engine, a one piece casting! It's as detailed as can be. Above: the drive sprocket mounting holes need to be cleaned out, and wire pins added for strength. Above right: interior, showing engine with no cover.



Above left: assembled lower hull without the cab. Note the exhaust. Right: cab in place. The photo-etched grills, on top of the hood and in the front, are in place. The bumpers are on; final alignment comes with the number plate. Below: the tarp, made from paper towel soaked in white glue.



beautifully to the radii of the wheels.

Now I had a tracked chassis with no cab. I also had one part not identified; close examination showed it to be the instrument panel, which is promptly glued into the cab and painted. The instructions would have you complete the cab, and then glue it to the chassis. No way. The photo-etched stuff is too fragile for this. Put the cab on, and then finish it. This means some brush painting, but it's easier.

By the way, check out the interior of the cab. There is no engine cover; it just sits out there, bare ass, with a muffler and exhaust pipe going up to the roof, which is a weird place for the exhaust. I can just see the new guy to the unit. Driver; "Pierre, mind the exhaust pipe." New guy; "What was that, Jean? Ow, ow, ow, Sacre Bleu, ow, that pipe is hot!"

The only tricky part of installing the cab is that exhaust pipe. You can't just glue it on the engine; it has to fit in the hole in the top of the cab. I did it by using gel super glue to place the pipe, then quickly

test fitting the cab, reaching in through the door to get the pipe into the roof hole. Once it has set up, the cab can come back off, if need be. If you're ready for it to go on, just flip it over and super glue it in place from the bottom.

Now the photo-etched bits can go on. The grill on top of the hood is a perfect fit; it dropped right into place. The front grill is a different story. Considerable work goes into making the opening fit the grill. The bumper is quite easy. Find something to match the curve on the provided template, and bend the two parts to fit. Now glue them onto the sides of the cab; do some test fitting, as the open ends will probably need to be shortened a little. I wanted to make sure that the license plate frame would align the two bumper halves exactly, so I glued a piece of stretched sprue along the inside bottom to be a guide. This worked like a charm. Before I glued these parts together, I put the Wehrmacht license plate decal on. This is the only marking I used, since I couldn't find any photos of anything else.

The light (right side) and the horn/siren (left side) go on now. I only had one rear view mirror; photos and the plans say two. I bent a piece of wire to mount it. Since this is an impressed vehicle, I put a German convoy light from the Italeri tank accessories kit on the back. The two roof "fish tail" exhausts I left off until after drybrushing.

There's a template provided for the windshield, but it's pretty rough, actually only giving you the width dimension. It's also one piece, where the windshield is actually two pieces. I made a template by placing a piece of paper over the opening and tracing the curve from the inside. After that it was all sanding and test fitting. I used white glue to

attach the "glass" as it dries clear with no frosting. There are a couple of photo-etched windshield wipers provided, but my photos didn't show them mounted, so I left 'em off.

On the back of the cab is a bolted strip. This is to attach the bed cover tarp. I made mine from paper towel soaked in white glue; when it dried it had nice texture and the 'look' of canvas.

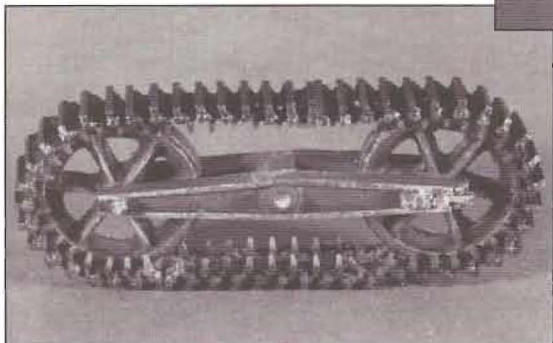
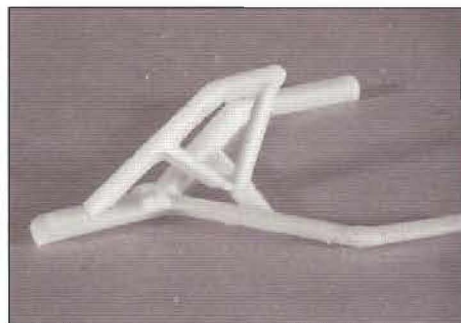
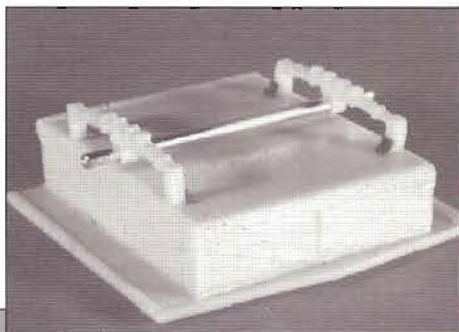
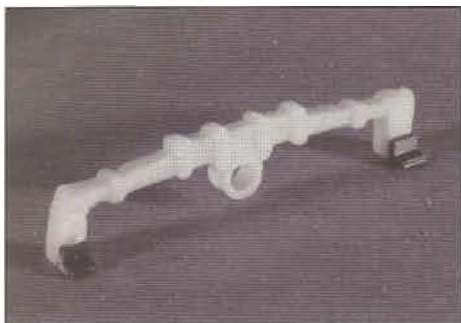
Now for the trailer. This is a quick and easy job, only taking me about three hours, and I'm slow. I began by mounting the bed on to the tank (the lower part of the trailer, part 29). I managed to do this backwards; the hole for the pump should be in the right rear corner. Easily fixed, though, I just drilled a new .070 hole for the pump. The other hole would be covered by the stuff in the bed.

The springs were next. The mounting points looked way too small to me, so I added some pieces of Plastruct angle to the back sides. This is invisible with the unit upright, and doubled the mounting area. The plans would have you mount what they call the 'lower rail' and what we'd call the tongue, and then glue on part 40, the 'vertical strengthener' or brace. This could lead to trouble, as the plans are none too clear in this area. Trial fitting showed that the brace fit in a particular way; one end on the outside straight part of the tongue, and the center angled part on a crossbeam inside the 'Y' of the tongue that is not even shown on the plans. Once this is assembled, it locates itself properly on the bottom of the bed.

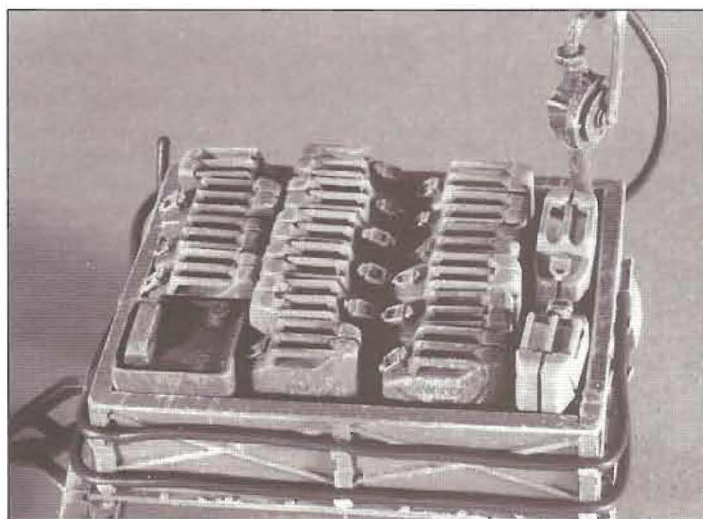
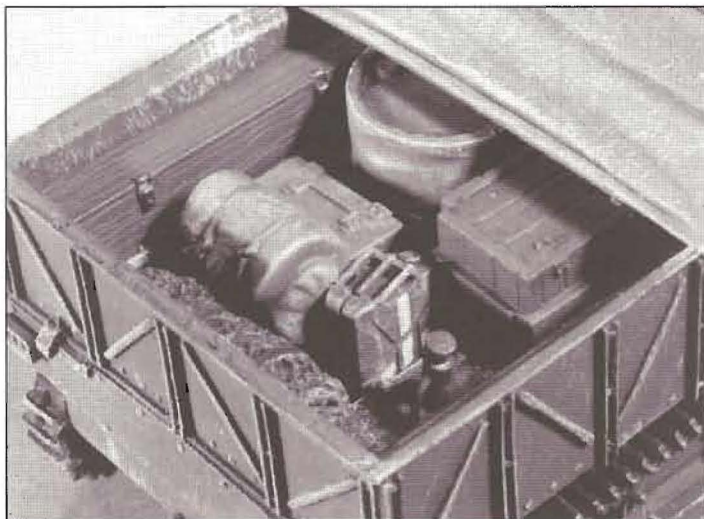
Next the mudguards go on; again the plans aren't too clear here, so a load of dry-fitting is needed.

The photo-etched fret contains thirteen brass plates (parts 32) to make the hooks to hold the fuel hose. You'll need to dig something up to bend these things with; the plans show them to be curved, not angular, so it's a bit tricky.

Now slide the axle in. It needed some cleanup,



Top left: one of the trailer spring units, with its mounting points beefed up by Plastruct angle. Above center: the springs in place. Above right: the assembled tongue. The plans would have you glue the lower part on, then add the upper. Above: one set of road wheel units with tracks. Right: the pump has been installed and the fuel hose routed around through the hooks as per the diagram. Below left and right: stowage in the tractor bed and the fuel trailer bed.



and also had to be shortened about an eighth of an inch. Spray the whole thing, along with the two road wheel assemblies, with the base coat.

The tracks can go on the wheel units off the vehicle; they're the same as the tracks on the tractor, and respond to heat just as well. Now glue these onto the axles. The plans say don't glue the wheels/tracks on. This is to provide articulation, I suppose, but what is supposed to hold all that stuff on the axle? If you leave the axle free to pivot in the spring hangers you've got the articulation needed. Add the tow hook.

Now put the handle on the pump, after drilling the end to accept the hose. Using the diagram in the plans, place the hose in the brass hooks. It looks great when it's done!

Now for all the stowage. The bed of the tractor got wooden crates, bedrolls, a water can, and some Verlinden 88mm ammo containers, both the wood

and metal ones. The bed of the trailer got an oil can (which covered the pump hole) and no less than eighteen jerry cans, seriously depleting my supply.

Conclusion

This is a nice little kit, or kits. I just wish there was some French stowage provided, or even

available as a separate kit. DES must be applauded for making such vehicles available, when the trend in the marketplace seems to be make any wild drawing board thing as long as it's German. ☒

—Joe Morgan

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References

The best photo I found was a front cover of the Saumur 'Friends' publication, number 30, March 1996. All the other pictures I found (a couple) were so muddy and grainy as to be useless.

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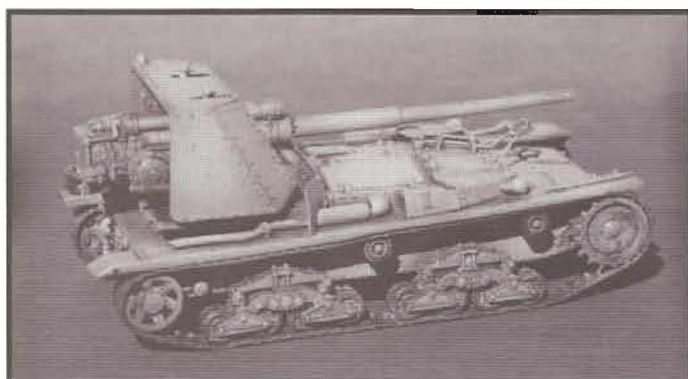
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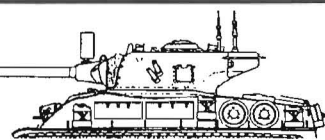
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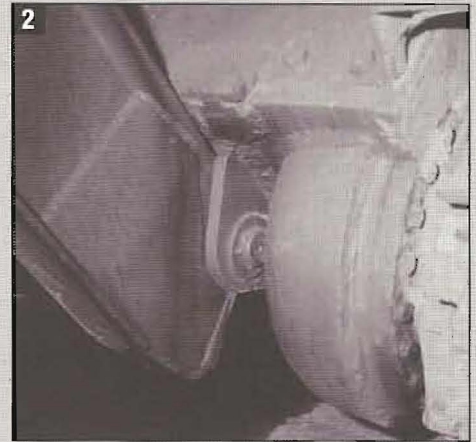
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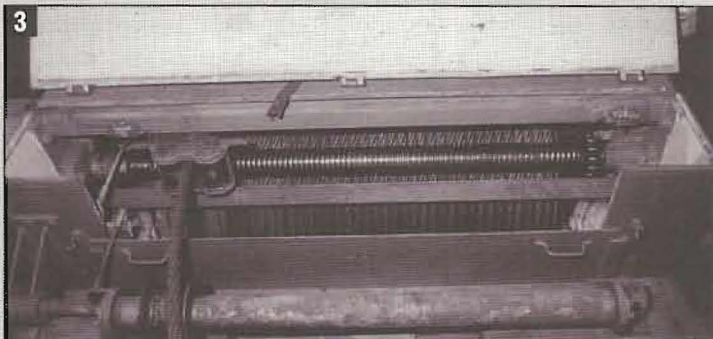
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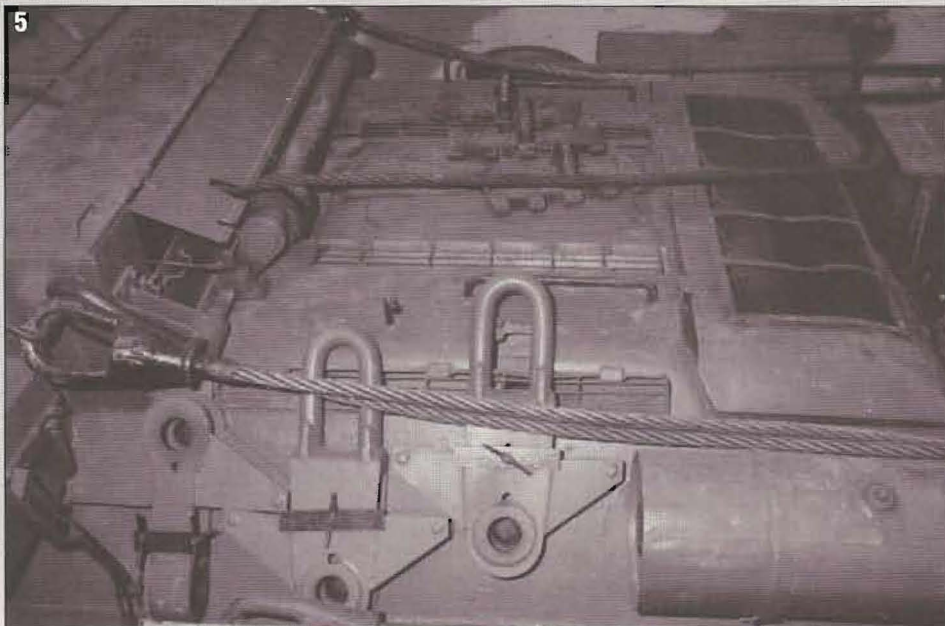
As promised, more pictures of the Czech VT-34

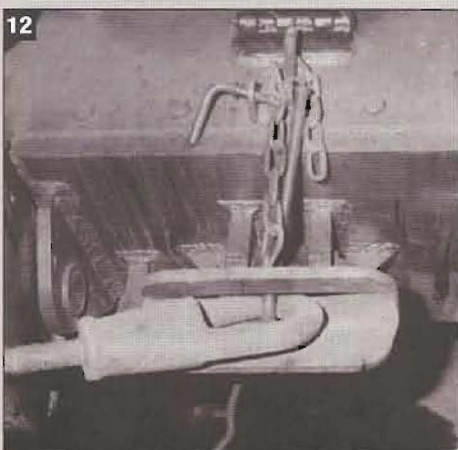


1) view of the front end of the VT-34. The fenders are the very late pattern. Note the cage over the light and the hook that keeps the cable away from the driver's visor. 2) detail of the connection point for the spade. Right hand side in this instance. 3) the cable intake and reel drum as seen through its metal door. The interior of this



compartment is white. 4) the same area with the door down. 5) the left hand side of the VT. Several of the large towing hawsers are visible as are some of the big cables and their heads. Notice the connection on the hawser tie-downs. 6) close-up of the cable feed reel on the back of the engine deck.





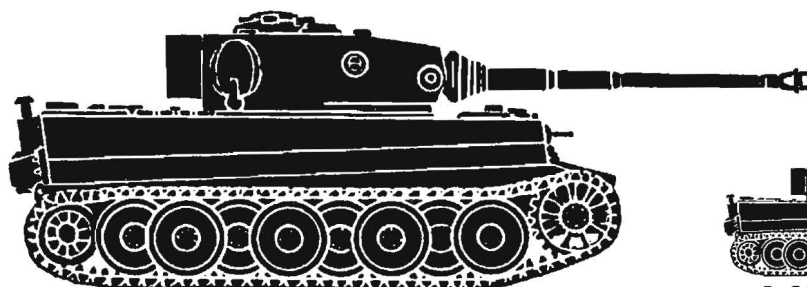
7) front view of the spade. The post-war exhaust shrouds are evident. 8) rear view. It's interesting how the cable is wrapped around the spade. 9) right hand side of the tank. The large reel is used in conjunction with the booms stored on the sides of the VT-34. It makes up a small crane. 10) MG operator's seat 11) driver's seat. Note the proximity of the winch reel. 12) the rear towing pintle.

All Photos: T. Aiken

Actual
Size
Comparisons

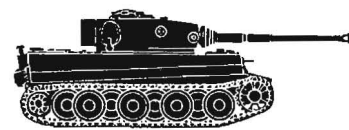


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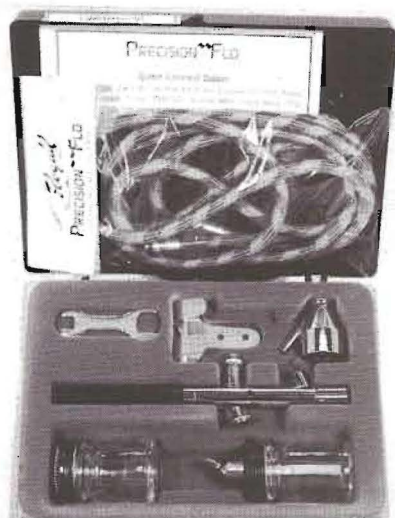
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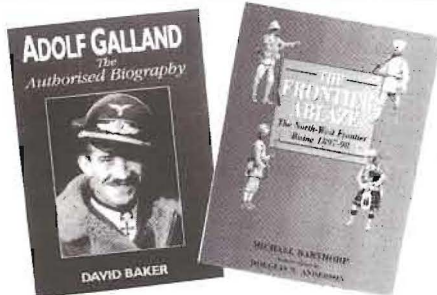
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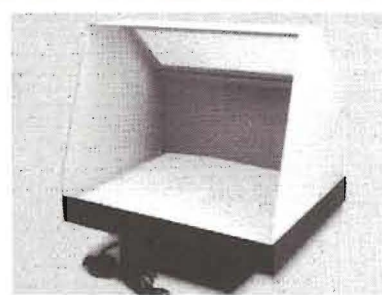
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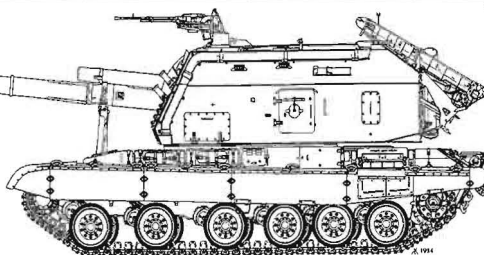
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Mini-Men

A Look at What's New on the Figure Front

O.K. It's Mini-Men the post-change years. Most of the comments have been favorable. A few have commented that they liked to old format. Especially the extensive historical background stuff. What, we don't get to sleep? Geeez. We'll probably settle for something that rests between the old and the new formats. But for now, we remain slim and trim—they just keep coming and coming... It looks like number eleven will be the same way. Even as we close this issue, there are more and more figgys marching in.



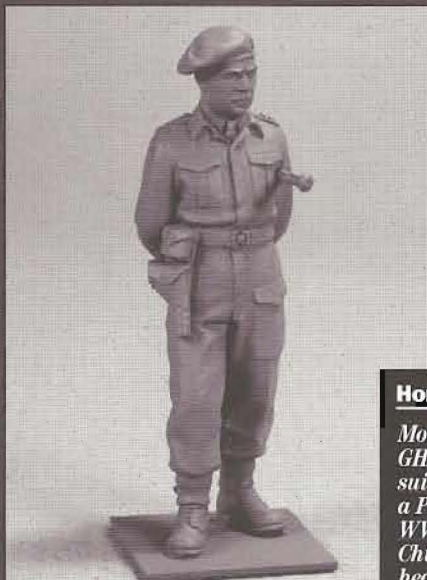
ADV/Azimut

We don't see much from these guys in the figure department. However we are now receiving one or two samples from this French manufacturer. This latest set is number 35557 and it's labeled as U.S. tank crew Ardennes. There's not much to pin them to this era and they would be useful for almost any scene in Europe or Italy. One crew member does sport over boots, so that would put them in the cold weather frame. One interesting thing about this set is that are sculpted by Rendall Patton, who does quite a few items for Warriors as well. If you're interested in having the style of your figures match, this would come in handy.



Dave Harper Castings

Dave Harper Castings is a brand new venture and the first two releases are Japanese Tank Crew (top) and British Scimitar/Scorpion Crew. We don't yet have stock numbers. Both are competent works and will enhance any vehicle they're plopped into. The Japanese crew is especially welcome.



Hornet

More terrific stuff from Roger Saunders and Hornet. GH25 is listed as a German Officer in camouflage suit WW2, but he's definitely going to found on many a Panzer. BHI7 is a really cool British Brigadier in WW2 battledress. Picture him watching the Tamiya Churchill roll by. Two new headsets, too. HG18 is 5 heads with German SS officer's crushed caps and HUH2 is 5 heads in US helmets with camouflage covers Vietnam War. Both highly useful.





Jaguar

Jaguar piles on the goodies! 63014 is titled "Out of Gas" U.S. Tankers. It's an instant vignette of two walking G.I.s with great little details like the torn pants and uniform stitching. 63013 is U.S. Refueling Party. It even includes a small gas pump. More good detail. 63017 is "Have a Drink," a three figure scene showing two SS officers giving or receiving a drink from a young lady. The female figure here is quite a stunner. All these sets appear to be the work of Mike Good and they represent a notch up in the overall quality of the line.



The Show Modelling

We have finally gotten our hands on some of these great little miniatures. They've been hard to find, but this is beginning to change. Each is cast in resin and we recommend them all.



German Tank Commander, 073



Panther Commander, 069



Assault Gun Crewman, 077



Panzer Division Officer, 079



German Tank Commander, 072



Verlinden

Just a couple of VP's latest. 1172 is German Mountain General. It's not listed as such, but it's clearly a portrait figure of Generalleutnant Eduard Dietl, commander of 3.Gebirg-Division and prominent personality at Narvik. A truly superb effort. 1174 is a two figure set labeled Soviet Infantry WWII. These are two more re releases in resin, of former ARA figures. What was good in white metal is even better in resin. And excellent value for the money make this one great for spare parts, too.



Yanks Miniatures

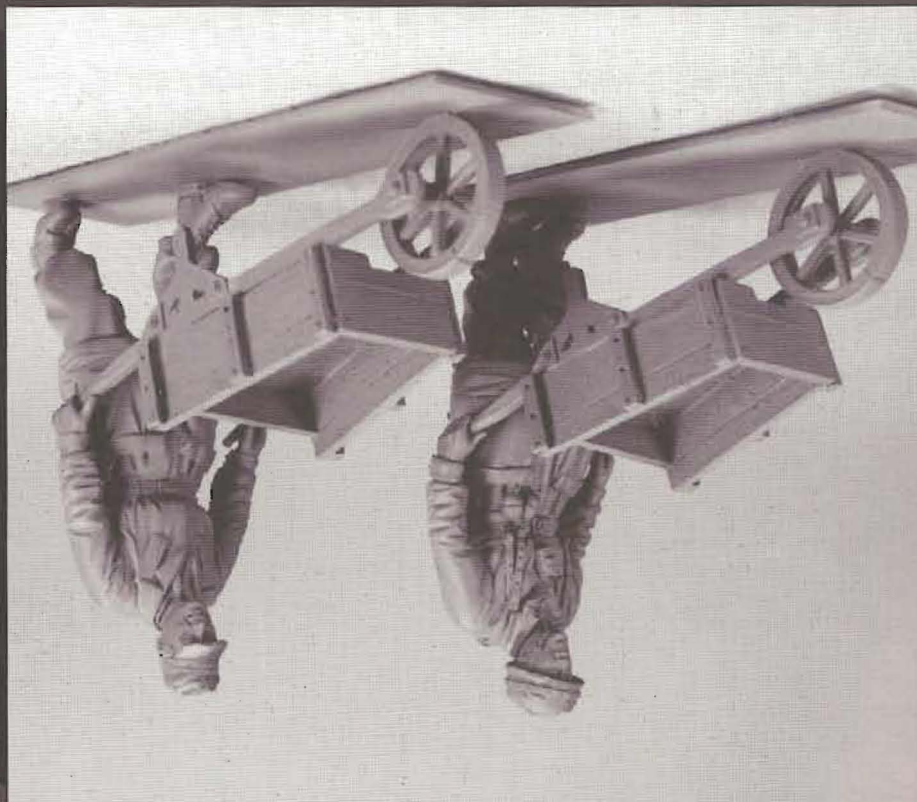
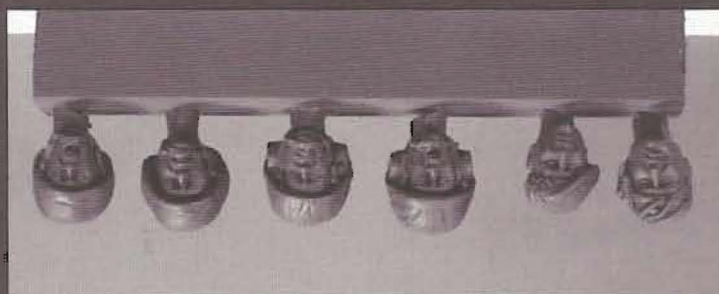
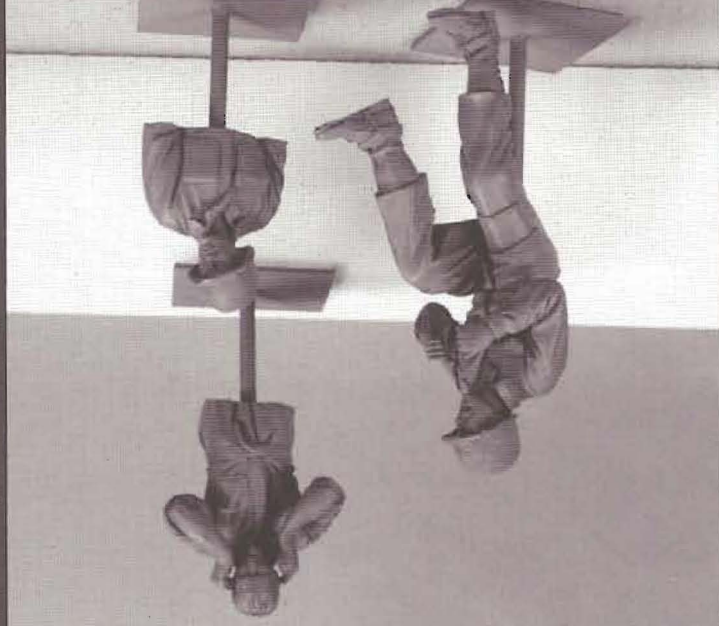
A brand new manufacturer of 1/35th scale figures is Yanks Miniatures. They tend to cater to Allied items, but many of these will find a place in the dioramas of die-hard German fans. Number 9603 is listed as U.S. Walking POW's. This is two forlorn looking figures trudging along



with their hands up. One figure is wearing a bandage across his face. Number 9608 is U.S. POW's Standing and this depicts two dog faces, one in a Mackinaw and the other with his overcoat across his shoulders. We like that one of these figures is obviously smaller in stature. You



don't see that much. The third sample is listed as 9621, Russian Defiance. It rather cleverly depicts a surrendering Russian soldier with a nasty surprise for his captors—a grenade under his foot. Look for more Yanks figures in issue II of MMIR.



Warrior Scale Models

Like the Energizer Bunny, Warriors just keeps going and going. 35074 is a fun set of two Fallschirmjäger pushing wheel barrows. This is reminiscent of photos of German paras in Normandy. No gear is provided for them to push, but it shouldn't be too hard to find some in your scrap box. 35083 is a chilling figure of a Russian tankier eyeing the result of his Takarov pistol. He'd look great next to a knocked-out German tank. Executed well, this is a must have item. 35080 is a useful Modern British headset. Perfect for the recent proliferation of modern Brit vehicles. We like the fact that Warriors gives you six heads, instead of the customary five. 35082 is a nifty three figure set inspired by a photo in the Squadron book on the Sherman (page 14). The scene depicts a soldier just rockin' on the tank's .50 cal. One of the crew plugs his ears against the noise, while the other seems oblivious. Warriors has added a helmet to the firing figure, but other than that the scene is lifted right out of the photo. A interesting and different way to deck out your Sherman.



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In the last issue we stated that Ken Dugan was not fit to live with pigs. As it turns out, he is indeed fit to live with pigs (or at least work with them).

We are sorry for any misunderstanding.

WANTED: Any 1/35th spare parts, figures, accessories, broken kits you no longer want. 1/35th Squadron Combat Line of white metal figures. R.P. Hunnicutt's Pershing. Doug Somers, 417 Harmony Drive, Wheeling IL 60090-6215.

FOR SALE: 1/35th Metal Artillery and resin accessories. PAK 38: \$25.00. LeFH 18: \$45.00. WWII US or German packs 20 pcs: \$6.95. Asst. crates 16 pcs: \$8.95. For current listing send LSSAE to: Mad Mac's Workshop, P.O. Box 430, Coventry RI 02816-0008.

WANTED:—ESCI WWII 1/72 80 HND 83 series armor, ROCO WWII U.S. halftracks and armored cars. German WWII halftracks and armored cars. ESCI 1/72 hard plastic WWII figures. FUJIMI 1/72 hard plastic German Africa Korps figures and old Airfix, ESCI watch-box, ROCO, ROSHKOF and EKO catalogs. Also giant WWII figures. Jim Glynn 203 Old Allamuchy Rd, HP1.3 Hackettstown, NJ 07840.

WANTED: R.P. Hunnicutt's "Pershing". Willing to pay \$\$\$ depending on condition of book. Italian crusader kits unbuild. Also looking for reference books with lot's of pictures on WWII Italian men and equipment. Contact Mike McIlroy, 2411 Voorhees Ave. #2 Redondo Bch. CA. 90278 (310) 214-3714.

WANTED: The following kits in 1/35. Tamiya's Horse Drawn German Field Kitchen. Tamiya's Mounted German Infantry. ESCI's Horse Drawn German Supply Wagon. Will pay for complete, unassembled kits—will consider semi-assembled. Steve Parker, 16418 Sky Blue Lane, Houston, TX. 77095.

WANTED: Tamiya 1/35th scale JSIII, built or unbuild, must be complete. Contact Bill Vanek 10731 S. Laverne, Oak Lawn, IL 60453.

1/35 scale drawings and scale drawing sets of World War Two German and Allied AFVs/PANZERS. Sd. Kfz. 251 Mittlerer Schutzenpanzerwagens (thirty-two vehicle types; Ausf. A, B, C and D). Each set sells for \$16.50 and has three to four 11 1/2" x 17 1/2" drawing sheets. Interior scale drawings are to a constant scale of 1/17.5. Many views of gun mounts, gun sights, I/R equipment, radios, stowage, etc. Other subjects are Sd. Kfz. 171 Panther (all types including JagdPanther), Ds. Kfz. 181 Tiger I (early, mid and late production), Sd. Kfz. 9 FAMO F3 Zugkraftwagens (all types), BergePanzers (all types), French Somua Halftracks (all types), German military trucks (many types), German and Russian armored trains and Panzerdraisines (armored railway trolleys mounting German and Russian tank turrets), plus many other subjects. Please send \$5.00 for ten page brochure to AFV/PANZER HISTORICAL RESEARCH CENTER, P.O. Box 2611, Boise, Idaho. 83701. U.S.A. Each brochure comes with a sample scale drawing (a \$5.00 value). Please indicate area of interest pertaining to the above mentioned military vehicles.

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WANTED: The Tank Magazine, volume 7, number 11, November 1984; also looking for the old Osprey/Vanguard numbers 7, 10, 12, & 14. Call (206) 572-8246.

WANT TO TRADE OR PURCHASE: 1/35 scale kits also 1/9 scale ESCI kits. I would also like to correspond and trade photos of finished kits. Write for my trade list. Randy Heiler, 650 Springfield Cir., Roseville, CA 95678.

FOR SALE: Armor kits, all types, all scales WWI to modern. Send two 32 cent stamps for list. Afrika Korps enthusiast wants books, mags and information on the Italian and German armies in Africa during WWII. Also 1/72, 1/76 and 1/160 scale armor and equipment. Always buying kits send me your list. Peter Rechkemmer, 3410 Sands, El Paso TX 79904.

FOR SALE: ALL KITS ARE UNBUILT, 1/35 DML figure kits. DML Light Seal Support Craft, some Tamiya armor kits, plus Verlinden 1/35 and 120mm kits. For list and price send L.S.A.S.E. to Danny Trepanier, 10070 Beach Rd. Waukegan IL 60087.

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WANTED: The following kits in 1/35 scale: #35103 Tamiya—Horse drawn German field kitchen; #ES5047 ESCI—Horse drawn German supply wagon; #ES5018 ESCI—German SdKfz 10/4 with 20mm, 30aa flak and crew; #ES5027 ESCI—German SdKfz 10/Hanomag 7 with Panzer Grenadiers; #ES5008 ESCI—SdKfz 10 and M18 light howitzer; #ES5013 ESCI—German Anti-Aircraft with, 20mm flak 30; #HE1132 Heller—French Hotchkiss (H35); #HE1170 Heller—French 50mua (S35); #TM(35104) Tamiya—German Krupp Protze; #DR6014 DML—Waffen SS tank crew; #IT219 Italeri—British Crusader MMIII; #IT221 Italeri—Opel Maultier; #IT323 Italeri—U.S. mil 57mm; #TA(35110) Tamiya—U.S. M8 self-propelled Howitzer; #TA35074 Tamiya—Tent Set-Afrika Korps; #TA35041 Tamiya—British M-3 Grant Mk I; #TA35011 Tamiya—German PzKpfw III Ausf. m/n; #NI-DT3 501 Nichimo—Sherman M4A1; #IT253 Italeri—U.S. M4A3 Sherman; Tamiya—Saladin MKII; #IT250 Italeri—Sherman; Tomy—Patton's Command Vehicle. Will pay for complete unassembled kits—will consider semi-assembled. Herminro Ramirez Jr., 216 West 99 St., apt #17, New York, NY 10025. (212) 665-0377 anytime.

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M114A1E1 RECON VEHICLE: I wish to purchase or trade for the Accurate Armour 1/35th kit w/the Hispano Suiza 20mm. Contact Hank Johnson, 7704 Willow Point Dr., Falls Church, VA 22042. (703) 204-0794.

WANTED: "two" 1/35 scale Verlinden large German rafts, any condition, or a similar item. Tamiya's SdKfz. 251/any version. Will consider partially built. Willie A. Ward, Baumholder CID, Unit #23813, APO AE 09034.

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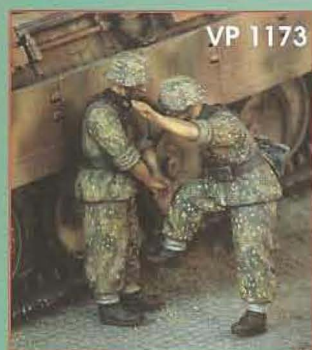
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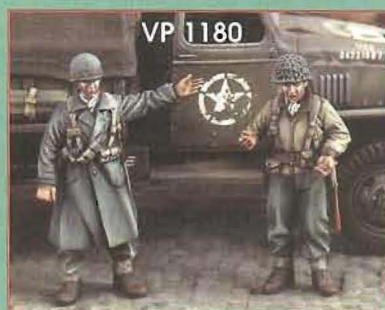
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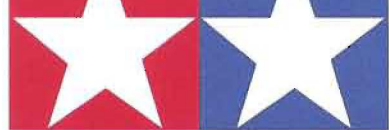
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